



BRAVE ROBBIE'S WEDDING JOY

Report by Rob Cox

'LOVE casts out fear'. That was the poignant message as Robbie Eves married his fiancée just months after being diagnosed with stage four cancer.

Surrounded by friends and family in St Thomas' Church in Stourbridge on Saturday, Robbie and his partner Gemma vowed to love, comfort, honour and protect one another.

After he was diagnosed with stage four bowel and liver cancer earlier this year, the decision was made to bring the wedding forward.

Robbie's mother Judie Eves said: "They have been engaged for four years and they always intended to get married in September this year. With Robbie's diagnosis it was all put on hold and then it was decided to bring it all forward. It was arranged very quickly in a matter of two or three weeks."

The couple started going out when teenagers, 16 years on they have two sons Ruaridh, four, and Euan, 21 months.

In an emotional and moving service, Rev Andrew Sillis told them: "You two have got a much better idea of what the future holds than most couples have prior to their marriage. In your situation many people would be afraid but what I see in you two is no fear at all."

Strength

"The strength you have in life for one another, that is indescribably admirable. Love casts out fear."

Rugby player Robbie, 34, from Stourbridge, has played at Stourbridge RFC since the age of six. He progressed through every age level to colts and was part of a successful team which won The North Midlands Cup when he was 16. He also played for his school team, Oldswinford Hospital School including a rugby tour of Australia in 2000.

Robbie, who became a software engineer, continued to represent Stourbridge Rugby Club at senior level. He also played for county team Hereford and Worcester.

Sixty players have already signed up to take to the field in a benefit match to be held on July 22 at Stourbridge RFC from 7pm. Money raised will go towards a trust fund for Gemma and the boys and for any treatment which can help Robbie. To help contact club president John Slim on 07989 786913 or visit www.justgiving.com for 'Helping Robbie Through Rugby'.



Gemma and Robbie

RACE FOR LIFE BRINGS OUT THE CROWDS AT HIMLEY



In the pink – The cancer charity fundraising Race for Life gets under way in the grounds of Himley Hall, near Dudley, on Sunday

THE pink army descended on Himley Hall on Sunday to take part in the 5km Race for Life in aid of Cancer Research UK and to remember loved ones lost to cancer.

Woman of all ages gathered at the starting line in the grounds of the stately home near Dudley as the race got under way at 11am.

Runners were in cheerful spirits as organisers warmed up the crowds on stage with a series of entertaining workouts. A minute's silence was held just before the run to remember those family and friends who died from cancer.

Many of the runners were homemade T-shirts with pictures of loved ones on whose behalf they were running to battle the disease.

It was the eighth year in a row for Dudley woman Sarah Trevis, who was joined by her daughter, sister-in-law and friend as they joined hundreds of runners in the 2016 fundraising event.

Sarah, aged 37, came dressed for the occasion as she sported a bright pink wig and face paint alongside a pink costume.

Sarah said: "I was running in memory of

my father-in-law, who passed away two years ago, and my uncle and my nan."

"My daughter Jessica, who is seven, who took part in the event with me, which was her second time of entering the event."

She added: "The first time I did it my nan had passed away and over the years my uncle and my father-in-law also passed away."

Participants can choose to either walk, jog or run around the course, which is the equivalent to just over three miles.

● Sisters rejoice – see page 2

BUSINESS

Car parts supplier is creating 18 jobs

A CAR parts supplier has opened a new site in Halesowen, creating 18 jobs.

Andrew Page has moved to the 17,000 sq ft site in Coombswood Way, which will act as the company's hub and help improve how it handles stock.

Chief executive Martin Saunders said: "The Midlands is a key region for us both in terms of its location from a logistics perspective, as well as the opportunities it brings in reaching additional customers. This site will also help us to expand our operations into Wales."

ROADS

Motorists set to endure delays

MOTORISTS are facing major traffic delays with a major route into Stourbridge set to become one-way for almost two weeks.

Diversion will be in place as part of a resurfacing scheme on the busy A491 High Street, Amblecote.

From July 25 traffic will only be able to travel south on High Street towards Stourbridge town centre from its junction with Collis Street. Drivers wanting to head north towards Kingswinford will be diverted through Wollaston.

ATTACK

Police appeal after man is stabbed

POLICE are investigating after a 29-year-old man was stabbed in the neck.

The attack took place on Saltwells Road in Netherton.

The man was treated for injuries at Russells Hall Hospital after making his own way there.

A police spokesman said: "Police are investigating. Inquiries are on-going."

"Anyone with information should call police on 101."

The incident happened last Friday (July 8) shortly after 8.45pm

INSIDE

JOKER JAKE IS GOING APE



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Motorcyclist died in collision with cars

A MOTORCYCLIST from Dudley was killed in an accident on a bend in the road near Bridgnorth.

Matthew Geoffrey Foster was killed when the Honda motorcycle he was riding hit two cars on the A545 at Swancote.

His family said they have 'lost someone very, very special'.

The 23-year-old, of Sycamore Green, had been out riding with friend Luke Taylor when the accident happened. The coroner at an inquest held in Wellington, Shropshire, heard that the pair had travelled from their homes in the Black Country on their motorbikes on February 24, before stopping at a roadside cafe in Quatt.

Speaking at the hearing, Mr Taylor said the pair headed for home at about 8.30pm and he believed they had been driving at about 30 miles per hour.

Mr Taylor was riding his Suzuki motorcycle ahead of Mr Foster as they approached a bend at Swancote. Mr Foster passed him on the opposite side of the road and struggled to cross back before hitting a Toyota car, and then a Jaguar.

Fast

He described Mr Foster as a 'talented' rider and said he was going too fast for the particular bend, adding: "I just don't think he realised how close we were to that bend."

Evidence was heard from nine motorists, including the drivers of the cars hit by Mr Foster.

A statement read out by Constable Sian Price from a road traffic collision investigator said they believed the accident may have been caused by excessive speed.

Shropshire coroner John Ellery ruled Mr Foster's death was caused by a road traffic collision.

In a statement released after the inquest, his parents Michael and Denise said: "Matthew was a typical lad who liked to have fun and enjoyed a joke or two. Matthew worked hard but also liked to play hard and loved adventure. We all loved him dearly."

Court convicts cowboy roofer over his frauds

A COWBOY roofer who preyed on pensioners has been banned from going door-to-door after being convicted of fraud.

Lee Gardner ran Xpert Roofing without qualifications, insurance or any actual expertise in the trade.

The 29-year-old, who worked a 16-hour week to protect his benefits, paid other inept labourers to do the hard graft, a jury at Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Mr Mark Jackson, prosecuting for Dudley Council, said: "The workers who put the expert into Xpert Roofing came from the pub. He didn't even know their surnames. He was a rogue trader who used dishonest, deceptive and misleading sales techniques."

Gardner offered to clean gutters for free in March 2014 as a 'thank you' to 77-year-old Christopher Hall for allowing them access to the roof of his neighbour in Bowling Green Road, Stourbridge. He then told Mr Hall that ridge tiles needed to be rebedded in a job that took no more than 45 minutes but for which he charged £500.

Gardner then told Mr Hall that the whole roof needed repairing and offered to do the job for £5,700 - that included a pensioner discount. Mr Hall phoned the next day to say he had changed his mind but Gardner said he had already ordered scaffolding, tiles and had arranged men to do the work. He did not tell the customer he had a right to cancel.

Mr Hall's son discovered that Xpert Roofing did not trade from the business address given and alerted trading standards.

A chartered surveyor found so many faults in the work that there was no option but to start the job again.

A woman in Bushbury also saw her bill soar to £1,570 after bringing in Gardner to fix a leaking gutter.

Gardner, of Brownfield Road, Shard End, who had twice been warned by trading standards, told the jury: "I never conned no-one." Mr Stephen Warlock, defending, said: "He is incompetent but that does not make him dishonest."

Gardner pleaded guilty to poor practice, was found guilty on four charges of fraud and not guilty of aggressive commercial practice. He was bailed until July 28 and issued with an interim ban on going door-to-door offering his services.

Run for Life sisters celebrate baby joy



Nina Gayden (right) was running Dudley Race for Life for her cancer survivor sister and mum-to-be Alannah Roberts

A STOURBRIDGE woman has spoken of her joy at discovering her sister is pregnant after three battles with cancer that began in her teens.

Nina Gayden, a Wolverhampton council worker, used to hold her terrified sister in her arms at night because the teenager 'didn't want to die alone' after being diagnosed with cancer.

Alannah Roberts was first diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma at the age of 15 after months of

unexplained tiredness and weight loss. By the time Alannah was diagnosed she was too weak to walk to the end of the drive at the family home in Dudley.

Immediate treatment was so urgent that doctors were unable to carry out the normal procedure of freezing her eggs so she could have children in later life.

Remission

Despite periods of remission the cancer returned three times until,

in 2010, she underwent total body radiation and received a stem cell transplant with her brother Daniel as donor.

Alannah recovered and is now pregnant with the baby is due in October.

The two sisters were sharing their inspirational story with hundreds of women at Dudley Race for Life at Himley on Sunday before Nina joined the 'pink army' to run the 5 km course in celebration of Alannah.

MP backing women's campaign on pensions

DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin has met with Black Country women campaigning against pension changes which they claim will leave them worse off.

The women were in Westminster to demonstrate against the Government's decision to accelerate rises to the State Pension Age for women so that it will reach 66 by 2020 - instead of 2026 as originally planned. Campaigners claim the changes have shattered their retirement plans.

Campaign group Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) accept that a rise in the retirement age needs to take place but say that the Government's reforms have been implemented too quickly. They have called for transitional arrangements to be put in place to support women.

In the Black Country 4,655 women have signed a petition in support of the campaign.

Mr Austin has joined the All-Party Parliamentary Group for WASPI and raised the issue with Government on behalf of local women. He will now be writing to over 2,000 women in his constituency urging them to support the campaign. He said: "Women who have worked hard and contributed should be able to plan for their retirement but the Government's rapid changes to the pension age have made this impossible. This is particularly important in the Black Country where lots of people left school at 15 or 16 and did hard graft instead of graduating in their mid-20s to start office work."

Former UKIP MEP is cleared

A FORMER UKIP Euro MP has been cleared of fiddling £3,250 of European parliamentary expenses.

Ex-MEP Nikki Sinclaire, who represented the West Midlands region in Brussels and Strasbourg until 2014, was unanimously cleared by a jury of misconduct in a public office and laundering money. She said it was 'the only just verdict' and criticised West Midlands Police's handling of the inquiry.

Throughout her two-week trial at Birmingham Crown Court Ms Sinclaire accepted personal negligence in not checking claims but alleged her expenses had been "deliberately corrupted" by her former office aide John Ison. He denied any wrongdoing, saying his actions were "for the good of the party", later telling the court he was no longer a member.

Coroner's officer in bid to find relatives

RELATIVES are being sought after a Halesowen man died.

Peter Poole, aged 74, of Apperley Way, died on July 12. He was born December 12, 1942. Family members are urged to contact coroner's officer Wendy Plummer on 0121 5696990.

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Driver who killed cyclist is given a one year ban

A MOTORIST who caused the death of a cyclist from Quinton has been given a one year driving ban.

Tammie Morrall, aged 41, knocked Nicky Brinton off his bike in Harborne.

Former Perryfields High School student Mr Brinton was taken to hospital but died a short time after the collision on November 11.

Appearing at Birmingham Magistrates Court, Morrall, of Galton Road, Bearwood, was given a two-year community order and banned from driving for 12 months.

She was also fined £250 and told to pay costs of £185 and a £60 victim surcharge.

She had pleaded guilty to causing death by careless driving at an earlier hearing.

A collision investigator concluded that the accident had been caused by the Focus driven by Morrall.

Mr Brinton's death was followed by family tributes, which said he was a 'thoughtful and considerate person'.

In the statement, the family said: "Nicky was the most thoughtful and considerate person, who had a real positive, fun-loving attitude to life. He will be hugely missed by his family. We are all devastated at his loss."

At the time of the accident Mr Brinton had been riding with his brother Mitchell, who said: "He loved nothing more than coming home from work and going out on his bike with his mates and his family, having the sense of freedom to concentrate on nothing but the road ahead."

Centre sells for nearly £500k

A FORMER day centre in Rowley Regis has been sold at auction for £480,000 – nearly three times the asking price.

Regis Lodge in Rowley Regis went under the hammer with a guide price of £180,000.

The building is at 50 George Avenue, situated on the corner of Birmingham Road and Henderson Way. It features office accommodation and occupies around 3,500sq metres.

The new owners have not been revealed. It was sold by auctioneers SDI Bigwood and was among 106 lots sold on the day, raising a total of £15,014,500. The auctioneers said the property could developed for its existing use or for residential purposes subject to planning approval.

Lace exhibition at cone cancelled

THE Lace Guild Exhibition due to be held at the Red House Glass Cone in Wordsley has been cancelled.

To learn more about the Lace Guild visit www.laceguild.org website.

Nine jailed over sex assaults on boy



Alan Priest – raped boy

A BLACK Country man has been jailed for life and another for three years after various men subjected a boy to 'horrifying' sexual abuse.

Alan Priest, from Halesowen, and bus driver Ian Prestleton, of Cradley Heath, were among a group of men sentenced.

Priest, aged 63, of Mucklow Hill, was jailed for life with a minimum term of seven years after being convicted of two rapes and sexual activity with a child. Prestleton, 54, of High Haden Road, received three years after being convicted of sexual activity with a child.

The boy was said to have been 'sold' in Birmingham's red light district during 2009 and 2010. A three-month trial at Warwick Crown

Court heard he was stripped, beaten and raped.

The victim, who complained to West Midlands Police in 2009 and 2010, had been let down by the authorities, Judge Sylvia de Bertadano said.

Also jailed for sexual offences were: Ashley Sherrington, 25, of Dawlish Drive, Stoke-on-Trent (nine years); Robert Bailey, 27, of Watt Road, Erdington (seven years); Michael Godbold, 57, of London (11 years); Tahir Hussain, 34, of St Josephs Road, Ward End (seven years); Peter Joynes, 59, of Canberra Way, Highgate, Birmingham (four years); Stephen Kelly, 40, of Elm Road, Bournville (eight years); Kevin Tudor, 55, no fixed address (nine years).



Ian Prestleton – three years

Disguised stun gun led to five year sentence

A MAN has been jailed for five years after being found in possession of a stun gun which was disguised as a torch.

Carl Welch kept the weapon at his home in Cradley Heath but it was discovered by police.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard there was no way of telling the item apart from a torch. But it was in fact a dangerous weapon capable of causing serious harm if fired.

Mr Kevin Jones, prosecuting, said Welch, aged 42, bought the weapon for £5 from a man assumed to be a drug dealer but had no idea it was actually a designed stun gun.

However, he later became aware that it was a weapon but did not hand it in, instead boasting that he had it and showing it off to friends, Mr Jones added.

"Officers found what they described as a disguised firearm. There was no markings on it to identify it as a torch," he said.

"He said he didn't know it was a stun gun when he bought it. He initially thought it was a torch."

Minimum

Possession of stun guns carries a minimum mandatory prison term of five years and Judge Kristina Montgomery told him she had no choice but to send him to jail for what she called a 'lapse of judgement'.

She said she accepted he initially thought it was a torch but that the minimum sentence 'ought to apply'.

She said: "That item gave all the appearance of a legitimate tool but was capable of firing a significant electrical output."

"I acknowledge what was said in mitigation but you came to know what it actually was and kept it in your possession for reasons only known to yourself."

The weapon was found at his home by police on January 22.

Welch, of Greenfield Avenue, had pleaded guilty to possession of a disguised firearm at a previous hearing.

He was told he would have to serve half of his sentence and would remain on licence when released.

Mr Gurdeep Garcha, defending, said: "He bitterly regrets what happened. He came by this item initially not understanding what it was. Of course, he accepts in due course he became aware of what it was."

Special delivery for food bank



Mike Crook, left, is handed the keys by company director Chris Lindop and managing director Andrew Lindop

A FAMILY-run Black Country firm has donated a van to a food bank to help support vulnerable individuals and families in crisis.

Amlin Motors relocated from its previous home in Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill, to Maypole Fields, Cradley Heath.

Managing director Andrew Lindop said the company was keen to give something back to community to mark the change of premises and thought of the Black

Country Foodbank, which is based close to its former showroom.

"The community has been really good to us and we just felt like we needed to give something back," he said.

"The food bank was the closest charity to us when we were at Brettell Lane and another thing is it has also got Black Country in the name."

"All of us here are really proud of our roots. We have got the flag

up here and when we go to motor racing events we have all got the Black Country T-shirts on."

"The foodbank needs vans, particularly a little one like the one we handed over, to get to the supermarkets. Admittedly it is not all selfless, we have got our name on the van, so there is a bit of advertising for us there."

Mr Lindop, aged 40, said the firm has invested £1.5 million in the new showroom.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Monster night out at the castle

DUDLEY Castle will be the atmospheric backdrop for an outdoor screening of a classic black and white horror movie this summer.

The Bride of Frankenstein, directed by Dudley-born Hollywood movie maker James Whale, will be screened on Saturday, August 6, at an event entitled Dudley Castle After Dark, as part of Birmingham-based Flatpack Film Festival's Black Country Pop-up Film Tour.

The 1935 movie stars Boris Karloff as the Monster and Elsa Lanchester in the dual role of Frankenstein author Mary Shelley and the Monster's mate.

The special screening will include some spooky surprises and the audience are invited to bring their own blanket or chair when the Black Country landmark is transformed into an open-air cinema.

Tickets cost £10 (£8 concessions) for the 8pm screening. The film is a PG and runs for 75 minutes. Tickets are available from flatpackfestival.org.uk/event/bride-of-frankenstein website.

Going wild with Haden Hill event

WILDLIFE enthusiasts can learn more about how to make homes for animals and insects next month.

RSPB staff will be on hand at Haden Hill House Museum in Cradley Heath from 11am until 3pm on August 3.

Visitors can have a go at making a small home for wildlife and get tips on encouraging creatures into their garden.

Carrying on the animal theme, staff from Dudley Zoo will be at the museum on August 17. They will be bringing along animals on the day from 12.30pm until 3.30pm.

Class extension given green light

A SCHOOL in Dudley has been given the go-ahead to create a classroom extension.

Blowers Green Primary's plan has been backed by Dudley Council.

Hayseed hillbilly rock at Robin from US band

BANJO-TOTING Tennessee rockers Hayseed Dixie bring their hillbilly versions of rock classics by the likes of AC/DC and Motorhead to Bilston's Robin 2 venue on Thursday, July 21.

They'll be on stage at 8pm, contact the venue's website www.therobin.co.uk or call 01902 401211.

Priory Road closures

A MAJOR road heading into Dudley town centre will close overnight for two night next month.

Priory Road will close between the Birmingham New Road and Berry Road on August 6 and 7 (Saturday and Sunday) between 11pm and 6.30am for resurfacing work.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



FUNNY things, noses. I was writing in my garret this week and was suddenly overwhelmed with a desire for chips. Why this sudden lust? Downstairs, Mrs Rhodes was cleaning the windows with vinegar and water.

I WAS reminded of the days when I started commuting to Birmingham and would find myself thinking of cold meats; ham, turkey, rare beef and so on. It was some weeks before I realised the big building next to Aston Expressway was the HP Sauce factory. At this stage I was going to coin a new word for the link between smells and memory. Sadly, according to Google, others have beaten me to it: nostalgia.

SOMEONE accidentally leaves a microphone switched on, capturing Tory veteran Ken Clarke describing Theresa May as "difficult." Having met Clarke a couple of times, I don't recall him being backward in coming forward, off the record or not. I wouldn't be surprised if Clarke knew perfectly well the microphone was live. My abiding memory of Ken Clarke is at a buffet luncheon. Most politicians nibble politely at such events. Ken ate all the pies.



FROM the front page of the Daily Telegraph last week, in a report where Boris Johnson is singing the praises of Andrea Leadsom: "She is level-headed, trustworthy, approachable and the possessor of a good Continued on Page 4." Never have three pages been turned so quickly. And on page four? "Sense of humour." So that's a relief.

MEANWHILE, in a weekend column raging against Brexit, one commentator warns that quitting the EU would turn Britain into "a dimly-lit, poverty-stricken, festering mess of warts, mud and minority-bashing incidents on the bus home every evening." And who is this champion of public transport and defender of minorities? Jeremy Clarkson.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Blow for sight charity as council cut funding

THE charity which runs the Beacon Centre for the Blind has been left reeling after £250,000 worth of vital funding was withdrawn.

Bosses at the charity, which supports blind and partially sighted people across the Black Country, said they are 'devastated' and concerned for the future.

Dudley Council defended its move saying it is having to make difficult decisions due to huge funding cuts from the Government.

By Richard Guttridge

The charity offers care for residents who stay at its independent living centre in Sedgley and the Beacon Court housing complex on the Wolverhampton Road. Its also runs an activity centre in Hagley Road, Oldswinford, Stourbridge.

Beacon Centre chief executive Arwyn Jones said: "We are devastated and disappointed that Dudley Council has completely withdrawn its funding and are very concerned.

Sustain

"The Beacon Centre will now explore how best it can sustain its services and the charity is now starting a consultation with its users."

The cuts represent around a 50 per cent drop in the centre's contract income for support and care across three services, although not the whole of its operation.

As a result bosses said donations and fundraising efforts are now more vital than ever.

Councillor Qadar Zada, Dudley Council's cabinet member for adult social

care, said: "In the context of unprecedented cuts to funding from central Government we have been forced to review the services we currently commission. This has led to difficult decisions where we do not have the budget for the range of services we previously offered and has led to a reduction of £3 million in our budget.

"We value all the work done by the voluntary sector and recognise it as a key partner for the local authority in supporting us to deliver services differently in the future. We have previously set out our vision of a £2.4m re-commissioning of services and we would very much welcome voluntary sector input into the implementation of this.

"We appreciate the significant anxiety and concern the changes are causing in the voluntary sector and we will continue to work with them to ensure that we protect care services for local people."

Carnival fun despite the rain



Carnival visitors enjoy a photo opportunity at Highfield Park

MORE than 3,000 revellers braved the odd shower to enjoy Halesowen Carnival at Highfield Park.

Opened by Mayor of Dudley Councillor Mohammed Hanif opened the event, which was hosted by Black Country Radio's Danni G on July 2.

The carnival king, queen and attendants were crowned, singers The Daisies started off the entertainment and the Jorvik living history group mounted a Viking invasion of the park. The fun-packed day was rounded off by the group AKA Ska Face.

Carnival chairman Councillor Stuart Henley said: "The atmosphere throughout the day was great for all.

"Whilst the performers were performing, we had the Vikings doing re-enactments in the arena, which brought in large crowds, and also a fun dog show which had a lot of entries.

"The event brought in approximately 3,000 but even more arrived once the show-broke."

The organisers are already looking for sponsors for next year's event and are urged to get on touch at halesowencarnival@gmail.com

Tata Steel sale of UK businesses is on hold

BLACK Country steelmakers face weeks of further uncertainty after India-based Tata puts sale of its UK steel business on hold.

Tata's board, meeting in Mumbai on Friday, had been expected to announce a shortlist of two from the seven bidders looking to buy the business, which employs 11,000 in the UK.

Instead they said Tata Steel has entered into discussions with strategic players in the steel industry to explore the feasibility of collaborations through a potential joint venture. The talks are at an early stage.

The Community union said the move continued uncertainty for thousands of steelworkers and their families, including around 750 working at sites in Brierley Hill, Wednesfield, Walsall and Wednesbury.

Tata said there had been seven expressions of interest after it announced in March it was selling its loss making UK assets. The bids had been considered and reviewed in the light of 'uncertainties' caused by Brexit, said the company. It has now decided to look at 'alternative and more sustainable' solutions. Discussions have started with companies including German firm ThyssenKrupp.

Koushik Chatterjee, Tata group executive director said: "We have initiated conversations for a strategic collaboration for our European business."

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Last orders is called on winter ale fair

THE annual Dudley Winter Ales Fayre has been cancelled this year because of a shortage of volunteers.

Dudley and South Staffordshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) has run the event in the borough for three decades. More than 2,000 people attended last November's 30th festival in Dudley Town Hall.

Branch chairman Ryan Hunt said: "It is with a feeling of deep regret that I have little choice but to announce the cancellation of Dudley Winter Ales Fayre.

"Unfortunately, with limited input from the local real ale community, we have to be realistic about what we can achieve as a branch."

The group held an emergency meeting on June 20 at the Park Inn, Woodsetton, to try to drum up help from its 1,200 members.

The branch had got Woodsetton's Holden's Brewery on board to sponsor the 31st fair, which would have featured 70 real ales.

Mr Hunt added: "I have no doubt that CAMRA members from all corners of the country will find this sad news hard to stomach. For 30 years, Dudley Winter Ales Fayre has been the go-to year-end festival for over 2,000 people. We cannot deliver your festival this year and for that I am sincerely sorry."

Indoor market here to stay, says manager

THERE is no prospect of Brierley Hill's indoor market closing, its manager insists. Wayne Jones said he wanted to calm any fears about the future of the indoor market. The building was put up for sale in May by the family firm, which have owned it for generations. It is believed it could sell for as much as £1 million

Rogue police officers warned they have nowhere to hide

Keep an eye out for talented youngsters



The Startime Variety cast and crew for Startime In Your Eyes at the Cornbow Hall this week

HALESOWEN-BASED theatre group Startime Variety will be showcasing local talent in their latest show, Startime In Your Eyes, at the Cornbow Hall.

With performances tonight (Thursday), tomorrow night, matinee and evening on Saturday, contestants will perform as famous singers in a production based on hit TV tribute show Stars In Your Eyes.

The contestants are contestants Vic Beddoes, Kelly Marley, Clive Ditchfield, Holly Mills, Katy Potter and Joanne Parkes, introduced by hosts Tyrone Howell and Laura Murphy.

Frozen

The show has been co-directed by Kirsty Aldridge and Darcy Grainger, who also promised a treat for younger audience members with a tribute to

the Disney hit animated musical Frozen. Kirsty said it was scary as a first time director and very demanding but all the cast had worked really hard to make it a really professional production and she promised the audience would not be disappointed.

Ticket prices are £10 or £35 for a family ticket and concessions £9.

For tickets visit www.startimevariety.co.uk or call 07901 055685.

WEST Midlands Police has pledged there is 'no hiding place' for rogue officers who abuse their position.

The warning follows the publication of the Disapproved Register detailing the number of police officers that have been sacked, resigned or retired while under investigation for serious breaches of the police code of conduct.

A total of 833 officers, ranging in rank from constable to chief superintendent, are on the register, which covers the period from December 2013 to November 2015.

The number includes 25 officers dismissed by West Midlands Police for gross misconduct, plus three who resigned before gross misconduct hearings but were believed to have had a case to answer.

West Midlands Police's head of professional standards, Chief Superintendent Andy Nicholson said: "Our officers swear an oath to serve the people of the West Midlands with fairness, integrity, diligence and impartiality. The overwhelming majority of our officers are loyal to that promise."

Dismissed

"Any officer that falls short of our high standards and is proven to have acted in a grossly negligent way can expect to be dismissed from the force."

"We are committed to providing transparency to the public and publish the outcomes of professional standards investigations on our website. We welcome the publication of the Disapproved Register. It shows there is nowhere to hide for police officers who have behaved in a way that amounts to gross misconduct."

The most common gross misconduct offences nationwide were giving of false evidence, data misuse, failing to perform duty, fraud or striking up relationships with vulnerable people encountered on duty.

Splashing fun times ahead at the pool

YOUNGSTERS can take the plunge this summer at Halesowen Leisure Centre. The Dudley Council-run complex in Pool Road will be hosting its popular aqua run with inflatables and obstacles and fun float sessions this summer.

'Mission Impossible' pool aqua run sessions will run from 1.15pm to 3pm every Tuesday and Thursday and are suitable for children aged 8 years and over, but must be a minimum 1.2 metre high and pass a swimming test.

Fun float pool sessions will be running in both pools and are suitable for all ages. They will run throughout the summer on Mondays and Fridays from 1.15pm to 3pm except Bank Holiday Monday August 29.

Both pool sessions cost £4.10 for adults and £2.60 for under 16s, with a 50 per cent discount for Options+ leisure card holders, and will run from July 25 to September 2.

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Coming to terms with ordeal 20 years on

TABLOID headline: "Thrifty Kate strikes again: Duchess of Cambridge recycles £900 yellow Roksanda dress to watch Wimbledon."

Hmm. She spent the thick end of a grand on a dress, and wore it twice. Depends on your definition of thrift, I guess.

AT my local branch of Boots at the weekend, a very charming shop assistant asked: "Is it a present?"

A little worrying, considering I had just purchased a bottle of Black Opium Nuit Blanche perfume. Apparently, its name refers to "A night in Paris once a year when rock chicks take control and make the city their playground until dawn."

Very alluring, I'm sure. But, on balance, I'm still more of a Brut 33 man.

IT is hard to believe it is 20 years since the Wolverhampton teddy bears' picnic horror, where paranoid schizophrenic Horrett Campbell attacked children at a nursery school with a machete.

The youngsters protected by the selfless actions of nursery teacher Lisa Potts are now grown up, and it is heartwarming to see the positive, mature way that victims Ahmed Malik and Francesca Quintyne have come to terms with the ordeal. Ahmed, now 23, says he does not have any feelings of ill-will towards Campbell, and was saddened by a headline from the time which described him as the "Face of Evil".

He said: "That made me angry. It did not take the issue of mental illness seriously. He was not evil, he was ill and was not fully aware of what he was doing."

Fran, now 24, has a degree in psychology and is working at a hospital. "I want to help prevent people with mental problems doing the sort of thing that Horrett Campbell did," she says.

It is hard to blame anybody for thinking that Campbell is evil. But mental health is the great elephant in the room which people have avoided discussing in polite society for decades. And while the likes of Campbell will always hit the headlines, there are many other people quietly suffering with conditions which could be prevented if only mental health was taken as seriously as physical health issues.

Good luck to both Fran and Ahmed. Let's hope their wise words are taken seriously and that something positive can come out of their ordeal.

JEREMY Corbyn kept a low profile throughout the Euro referendum, nominally supporting a cause many thought his heart was not in. His leadership is now hanging by a thread following a vote-of-no-confidence by his own MPs. Meanwhile, Theresa May also kept a low profile, nominally supporting a position many thought her heart was not in. And she is about to become Prime Minister. There's a lesson to be learned somewhere.



28a Hall Green Road, Sandwell



The former Lloyds Bank, Birmingham Street, Oldbury



The former police station, in Dudley Road, Birmingham

Don't let old buildings crumble into nothing

JESSICA LABHART talks to a woman who is passionate about saving important buildings left to rack and ruin

DOZENS of historically significant buildings are at risk of falling into disrepair in the West Midlands according to a new book which is appealing for potential owners to come forward to save them.

The buildings at risk include an ornate Victorian educational institute, an X-ray building, a very early branch of Lloyds Bank, a huge pub, a miniature police station and a pumping station.

The nine buildings feature in 'SAVE's 2016-17 Buildings at Risk Catalogue' which will be published on June 27.

The aim of the book is to encourage potential buyers to find out more about the buildings and perhaps put in an offer to save them from falling into further disrepair.

Liz Fuller, SAVE's Buildings at risk officer, who has compiled the book said: "The catalogue is a sampling of the kind of buildings that make our towns and villages distinctive and will be of interest to anyone who loves old buildings and their history."

Engineer

The guide, considered the ultimate 'lonely hearts' list for buildings across the country in need of new owners includes Bilston Science and Art Building, located on Mount Pleasant, Wolverhampton.

The school of art has long served Wolverhampton as a place of education and improvement. Situated in the Mount Pleasant area, it was built to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897. The building was designed by Captain Wilson, the Town Engineer. A number of nearby buildings from this era have been converted to new uses. The old tram shed is a Sikh temple and the ornate former drill hall is a popular live music venue.



Bilston Science and Art Building, located on Mount Pleasant, Wolverhampton

Other buildings included in the book are the X-Ray Building, Foundry Lane, Smethwick. Built around 1900 this building housed Commercial X-rays Limited until about 1990. The facade is described as having 'an unexpected elegance'.

Built of brick in a variety of colours, there are shallow segmental-headed window surrounds with key stones picked out in contrasting brick. The building is now in a very poor state of repair and stands in an area of other ex-industrial buildings, some listed Grade II and II. The Commercial X-ray building has in the past been used as an arts venue and the book's author hopes it could be brought back into use in this role or could provide interesting office space or light industrial space.

Meanwhile, 28a Hall Green Road, Sandwell was built in around 1800 has three storeys, the third being a rather low attic storey, with

a symmetrical front of two bays. The central door has a pediment. While the house probably stood in its own grounds just off a main road, it is now located in close proximity to a light industrial business and is surrounded by other modern industrial buildings. It is in quite a poor condition with its roof sheathed in protective tarpaulin. Given its location, it may not be suited to restoration to its original residential use.

The former Lloyds Bank, Birmingham Street, Oldbury, was the first branch office Lloyds Bank ever opened, in 1884. The house has three storeys of four somewhat unequal bays, with a door placed off-centre perhaps indicating that this used to be two house rather than one. The building served as a bank until relatively recently. Speaking of the building, Miss Fuller said: "This interesting and historic building is now standing empty and neglected.



The front cover of the catalogue

It could be suited to conversion to offices or retail at ground level with residential units above."

Dudley Road Police Station, Dudley Road, Birmingham, is another building featured in the publication. The house sits in the corner of Summerfield Park and used to be the local police station. It was built in the late 19th or early 20th century. The half timbered gable and canted window at first floor level forms an elaborate and eye-catching focus. It has been empty for some time and stands boarded up and graffiti-marked. Located as it is in the park, it could have a number of uses such as a community or children's centre or a cafe.

Mike Fox, SAVE Deputy Director, said: "Highlighting historic buildings from all over the country, and of all shapes and sizes, we hope that our readers will heroically take up the challenge and help revive these buildings."

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Employment laws need to be enforced

THE upsetting case of the delivery driver who was recently jailed for causing an accident through tiredness raises the issue of who is responsible.

The driver was not coming home from a nightclub but was completing a 16 hour day delivering white goods, a job he had to do in order to make a living. Had he been working on machinery in a factory and had collapsed due to exhaustion causing an accident would he still have been blamed?

We are supposed to have a law that workers do no more than 48 hours a week, this is

blatantly ignored. In the case of people who drive as part of their job, whether they be in a car, van or lorry, they should be limited to the amount of driving they should be allowed to do as coach drivers are.

There seems to be a macho culture that parking up and getting a proper rest is not the thing to do after a full day's work, however, that is exactly what should be the norm. Maybe there could be a study to see if employment laws need to be enforced.

R GWILLIAMS
Brierley Hill

Full support for Sir Cliff

I AM writing in response to the letter from D Pope who supported Sir Cliff Richard.

I agree whole heartedly with everything he says.

I have been a Cliff Richard fan for as long as I can remember, and together with my husband and friends have seen him on numerous occasions.

In fact last year when we went to the Royal Albert Hall to see his 75th birthday show, he was given a tremendous standing ovation before he had sung one word.

All of Cliff's loyal fans have stood by him through his horrendous ordeal, so have many of his show-business friends.

I sincerely hope that Cliff can now move forward with his life, knowing that his fans will love him and support him always.

J SAMPSON
Kingswinford

Leave vote must not be overridden

M. Cliff's suggestion that MPs should override the result of the EU Referendum is profoundly anti-democratic.

For some time, Governments have been elected by less than 40 per cent of the voters. General elections are decided by the outcome in about 100 target seats. Electors in safe seats opposed to the sitting MP are reduced to protest votes and tactical voting.

The EU Referendum was one where every elector felt that their vote counted. Consequently, there was a much higher turnout.

There is a need for a Proportional Representation voting system. This would give smaller parties a number of MPs that reflected their number of votes.

Then no one could be dismissed as having cast a 'wasted vote'.

I voted to stay in the EU and was disappointed by the result. But to allow MPs to override it would be a big step on the road to dictatorship.

R TABERNER
Tividale

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

dudley.chron@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Gridlock predicted near new Aldi store

RE the new Aldi on the A4123 Birmingham New Road

I would be interested to know what arrangements have been made/agreed by DMBC for vehicles entering/exiting the car park at the above.

At 4:30 today I was in a queue of traffic approaching the traffic lights at the junction where Aldi is being built.

I was in this queue for over five minutes before negotiating the junction, the main reason of course is due to the stupid traffic lights sequence further down the hill towards Wolverhampton.

It only takes one vehicle

to attempt to turn right into Sedgley Rd West to create total gridlock back as far as the A4037 past the Dudley Canal Trust.

Surely the sequence could be changed allowing an unimpeded right turn into Sedgley Rd West or, better still, create a right turn slip road - as per the access from the A4123 onto the A4037 by the Sea Cadets HQ further back on the A4123.

My concern is that once Aldi is opened, there will be additional traffic leaving their car park thus creating an even greater gridlock.

J RICHMOND
Sedgley

Barr Beacon in Geopark?

I AM writing in response to an article regarding the formation of the Geopark in the Black Country (Geology sites get global attention, Dudley Chronicle, June 30).

I can't understand why Barr Beacon is in the equation when - by no stretch of the imagination - is Barr Beacon in the Black Country.

I am sure a lot of true Black Country readers would agree with my query. I would appreciate it if someone could explain.

E PROVAN
Cradley

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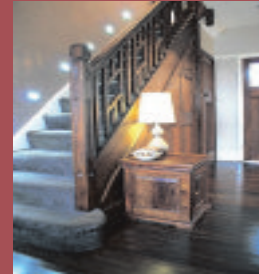
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FIVE MINUTES FROM MERRY HILL

Celebration spotlights Black Country beer, engineering and glass expertise

Showcasing the best of region at Westminster

BANKS'S Bitter, military aircraft parts and the finest glass wares have been among the items on display after a host of the Black Country's top firms descended on the House of Commons.

Eighteen of the region's most celebrated businesses were invited to a one-off event at Westminster to showcase all that is great about innovation and entrepreneurialism in the Black Country.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin has worked with the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to give local business figures, Government ministers and MPs from all parties the chance to meet businesses and see how the region produces everything from nuclear reactors and Bugatti sports cars to Olympic torches and the country's most bostin' beer.

Mr Austin said: "I grew up in Dud-

ley, I love the Black Country and I'm proud of it. Manufacturing is a really important part of the Black Country's heritage but I want to show that hi-tech manufacturing, science and technology has a bright future in the region too.

"That's why I'm delighted to be able to organise this event in Parliament, where our brilliant local producers and manufacturers can show off their work to MPs from across the country."

Aerospace

Dubbed the Black Country Day Celebration, Tuesday's event saw a range of products on display in the oak-panelled Jubilee Room.

Among the companies exhibiting will be Wolverhampton-based aerospace experts HS Marston, Wednesbury aluminium firm Alucast, Stourbridge Glass, CUBE Precision Engineering from Rowley Regis and brewers Marston's and Holden's. Tony Sartorius, director at Alucast, said he hopes to display an Olymp-

pic torch and the front caliper for a Bugatti supercar – both produced at the firm's Western Way site. We want to make politicians interested in the work we do," he said.

Ninder Johal, board member of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, said the event would help to highlight the 'great feats of manufacturing' that the area is synonymous with. The Black Country is a proud centre of manufacturing, but it is important that we look to the future," he said.

"We have a wonderful mix of innovative and traditional industries here. We need to make sure we put the products of these industries on show. The event in Parliament is a great opportunity to let the people making the big decisions see exactly what we have to offer as a region."

The event has been backed by MPs from both sides of the political divide.

Wolverhampton South East's Labour MP Pat McFadden, said the Black Country did not always get the credit it deserves for the innovation

of its businesses. "The Black Country can sometimes be overlooked on a national and international level," he said. "This event is a fantastic opportunity for Black Country firms to bring their great products to Parliament. I hope it is a great success for our area."

Stourbridge's Tory MP Margot James has pledged her support for the event. She tweeted: "Delighted that @ianaustinMP is showcasing the best of our wonderful Black Country on the 12th July in Parliament."

Other firms exhibiting at the event included West Bromwich-based alloy wheels manufacturers Rimstock, Dudley furniture specialists Boss Design, the Westley Group, and automotive interiors firm Cabauto.

Meanwhile the Black Country LEP will deliver presentations on the manufacturing city initiative and virtual car solution the Black Country Bullet.

The event comes in the midst of the Black Country Festival, a month of events aimed at celebrating the region's rich heritage.



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New start for Christian after his year of pain

CHRISTIAN Caddick anticipated the happiest year of his life when his girlfriend said 'yes' while holidaying in idyllic and sunny Somerset a year ago.

Little did he know awaiting him would be two life-threatening illnesses and a broken ankle before he even reached the first anniversary of his engagement.

The 25-year-old has put that behind him and is aiming to join 20,000 runners for Great Birmingham Run half marathon on October 16 to thank the charity that helped save his life.

Mr Caddick, born in Wordsley, was treated at the Teenage Cancer Trust's Young Person's Unit, YPU, at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham.

He hopes to help raise £25,000 for the charity.

"Looking back now, it's hard to believe what's happened," he said.

Lucky

"To go from getting engaged to being diagnosed with cancer in exactly three weeks, then to break my ankle and get a blood clot on my lung. It's been a stressful, surreal year.

"But I try to see positives in everything. I'm really lucky to be here and want to embrace everything.

"Teenage Cancer Trust is aiming to raise £25,000 at the half marathon and I want to help them achieve this.

"Their staff helped save my life and were so supportive during my treatment. I now want to help them save more lives."

Mr Caddick's traumatic 12 months began after the joy of fiancée Sarah Buckler, 24, agreeing to marry him. He was diagnosed with testicular cancer after finding a lump in his chest.

After undergoing an orchidectomy to remove a testicle, it was discovered



Christian Caddick will be taking on the Birmingham half marathon this year the disease had spread to his lymph nodes. Nine friends rallied in shaving his head the day before his gruelling nine-week course of chemotherapy began, raising £12,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

He entered remission on October 16 – the date he will be running the Great Birmingham Run this year.

The technical manager for Third Financial Software, Halesowen, signed up for the half marathon in January and began training but just a month later skidded down a bank while fetching a football during a five-a-side and broke his left ankle. He was in plaster for seven weeks but developed a far more serious condition. Bed bound



Christian Caddick and fiancée Sarah Buckler during his cancer battle with a fever, he became short of breath on Easter Sunday and was diagnosed with a pulmonary embolism. His blood-thinning medication finished the day before his 25th birthday. "I'm hoping my birthday marks the start of a better year," he added.

"When the doctor told me I'd got cancer, my mum and fiancée were probably more shocked than me. It was tough to hear, but I just said 'let's beat this'." The chemo, feeling sick everyday, was nine long weeks but being around people of my age on the YPU was a big help. I also had amazing support from my family and friends. To sponsor him visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ChristianCaddick988

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£1m for restoration of historic buildings

Jake goes ape for gorilla



Jake Pearson, of Dudley, has bought an eight foot gorilla for his garden

WHEN decorating a garden, some may opt for pots and planters, maybe a gnome but Jake Pearson prefers a more eye-catching ornament. That is certainly the case when his latest decoration arrived – an 8ft tall gorilla. It certainly got a few curtains twitching in the Dudley street where he lives.

The model has taken pride of place on his driveway alongside some other unusual decorations –

enough dinosaurs to make his part of Pensnett Road look like Jurassic Park. Jake has four grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren himself. He said: "The kids love it and that's why I do it."

There is a serious side with Jake encouraging anyone who poses for a photo with the gorilla to donate some money to Cancer Research after his wife Eileen died of the illness in February.

MORE than £1 million will be spent on restoring historic buildings in Dudley town centre following a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Cash-strapped Dudley Council has been awarded £1,178,000 funding, which is the second cash boost from the HLF, to continue its regeneration of the town centre.

The money will fund work to restore 14 buildings which could see them then used by local businesses.

Council bosses say the funding will help 'breathe new life' into Dudley town centre, but are yet to announce which sites will be restored.

"We have big plans for this second phase of investment, which will run over the next four years and will see the restoration of 14 key town centre properties," said Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, cabinet member for planning and economic development.

Significant

"We are really grateful for this second significant boost of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund."

"We have identified the 14 buildings but haven't really clarified the plans yet and it is too early to say what the buildings are."

"We've already seen how this money can transform buildings and breathe new life into our town centre, with many new businesses hastening to take over these rejuvenated buildings."

The latest round of funding will link Dudley's retail area to the Civic Quarter.

The work aims to make the town centre a more attractive destination to shop, work and visit, which will help boost trade for local businesses.

Dudley Council also plans to launch a town centre geo trail, a smartphone app, heritage open days and town ambassador training sessions as part of the rejuvenation.



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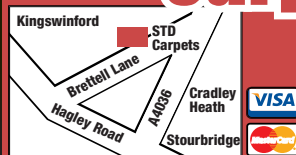
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Wolves fans ran across the Cotswolds



Craig Purser, left, and Phil Marsh completed the equivalent of four marathons in four days in their Cotswolds run

TWO friends who were bought together by their shared love of Wolves completed an epic challenge by running four marathons in four days.

Phil Marsh and Craig Purser began running together after striking up a friendship at Molineux.

Their latest challenge saw them take on a 107-mile run around the Cotswolds – meaning they had to cover more than 25 miles a day on average.

Phil, 59, only began running at Craig's behest eight years ago. Car mechanic Phil, from Lower Gornal, said: "I was one of those who would watch people run by in the rain think-

ing 'they must be mad'. Craig talked me into carrying the bags at a Spanish marathon in Palma. I ended up signing up for it and enjoyed it."

The pair have since taken on dozens of challenges together but Phil admitted the Cotswolds challenge was tougher than anything he and heating engineer Craig, 38, from Brierley Hill, had faced before.

He said: "I would normally look at doing a four-hour marathon but this was an unknown. 'I have heard people have taken the wrong turn and added another five miles on."

"It's a mixed terrain. There is 30

to 40 miles of off-road and we run through little villages. There are some hills as well."

They started in Chipping Camden and spent the next four days making their way to Bath.

The pair ran for the charities Mind and the Acorn Children's Hospital and raised more than £1,000.

The pair initially met in 2008 as season ticket holders to Wolves.

This is just the latest in a series of challenges they've done together, also including the annual cross country running event 'Race the Train' in Wales.

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Hot weather danger to dogs

THE number of complaints made to the RSPCA about dogs and animals being left in hot cars in the West Midlands is continuing to rise, new figures reveal.

Concerned charity bosses have launched a new campaign urging pet owners to take extra care of their animals.

The RSPCA attended 230 call-outs relating to dogs in hot cars across the region in 2015 – a rise from 223 in 2014 and 124 in 2013.

The charity receives thousands of reports of dogs suffering from heat exposure across the country every year – that equates to one call every hour.

As well as animals left in hot cars, this can include dogs outside who are suffering from the heat as well as those in conservatories or caravans.

In 2015, the RSPCA received a total of 8,779 calls nationwide to report incidents of dogs suffering from heat exposure – more than 3,000 more than in 2010.

Death crash driver fails to win appeal to cut sentence

A DRIVER who smashed into a bus stop killing a university student and seriously injuring her friend has been told by judges that his eight-year jail term is deserved.

Sukvinder Singh Mannan was driving at 101mph after a high speed race when he lost control of his red Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution and ploughed into the bus stop on Hagley Road, Quinton, in May 2014. The impact killed Rebecca McManus, 21, from Oldbury, while her friend Harriet Barnsley, also then 21, was catastrophically injured.

Miss McManus died almost instantly, whereas Miss Barnsley suffered serious brain injuries, a smashed pelvis and two collapsed lungs.

A breath test on Mannan showed up positive but at hospital he refused to allow a sample of his blood to be taken.

Mannan, 34, of Roundhills Road, Halesowen, admitted causing death by dangerous driving last year. He also pleaded guilty to causing serious injury by dangerous driving and failing to provide a blood sample. He was jailed in December.

Last week he asked judges at London's Criminal Appeal Court to soften his punishment. But Lord Justice

Lloyd Jones said: "It is said that there was no clear evidence that a substantial amount of alcohol was consumed. We are quite satisfied that there was such evidence. The paramedic smelled drink on his breath and his speech was slurred. The reason he was driving at 101mph was because he was racing. The racing was a very significant cause of the death of Rebecca."

He added that Miss Barnsley will be seriously disabled for the rest of her life. Dismissing the appeal, the judge sitting with Mr Justice William Davis and Judge Gregory Dickinson QC, said such a serious offence "justified a very high sentence".



Sukvinder Singh Mannan

Views sought on Metro Mayor

A CONSULTATION has been launched on what powers the Metro Mayor should have within the new West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).

The post is due to be filled following an election in May next year and residents are being asked to comment on what decisions the figurehead should be allowed to make.

Powers could extend to determining local tax levels and business rates, and could also include the final say over housebuilding and transport schemes for the region.

Councillor Bob Sleight, chairman of the WMCA, said: "The idea of a mayor for the WMCA area is to provide a strong voice for the region. They would also be an ambassador for the area."

To take part in the consultation visit westmidlandscmbinedauthority.org.uk

Penguin waddles into TV spotlight



CBeebies presenter Andy Day takes a break from filming at Dudley Zoo with new arrival Sebastian the penguin

SOME of Dudley Zoo's newest arrivals have had a brush with stardom by entering the spotlight for a new children's TV programme.

The zoo's hand-reared Humboldt penguin Sebastian and three newborn peafowl chicks will soon be appearing in a new CBeebies series, hosted by children's presenter Andy Day. Andy and his crew visited last week to film the chicks for the autumn TV show.

Resource offering careers guidance

AN INITIATIVE to help young people make informed career decisions is being offered to students in the West Midlands.

Holly Hall Academy in Dudley is one of the first schools in the region to implement 'Start', an online resource which provides access to comprehensive careers guidance for teachers, parents and students.

The software is designed to help young people connect ideas, interests and aspirations to jobs and educational pathways.

At the heart of Start is a job bank which includes more than 1,600 jobs providing detailed information on the qualifications required, typical salaries and the user's own suitability for the role. Linked to this is live market information, showing opportunities in the student's locality, giving a real indication of the current labour market and job availability. The software is developed by careers guidance company U-Explore.

Zoe Turton, Intervention Co-ordinator at Holly Hall Academy, said: "We work closely with students to ensure they have all the information they need to make the best choices for their future. Start has proven to be a resource the students are already benefiting from."

"The software takes into account the personal preferences of the user and suggests roles which are suited to their qualities, skills and work preferences. It's a unique tool which we are confident will have a significant impact on the futures of our students."

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Still sitting pretty with vintage lace at auction

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES

By John Ridgway, of Perry & Phillips



A NUMBER of years ago, when every-one aspired to have a Laura Ashley-style home, lace was massively popular and was snapped up very quickly both at auction and in antiques centres.

Since then its appeal waned as design trends changed.

Now, however, we're seeing its fortunes wheel around as once again lace items seem to be appealing to the buyers.

And remember that lace doesn't have to be restricted to period homes or country cottages, it can look really good in a contemporary property.

There are all kinds of lovely lace-trimmed items to look out for that will look great in rooms throughout the home.

For a dining room or dining kitchen there are cotton and lace runners, table cloths, table centres and napkins.

In the sitting room you could use cushion covers and small mats, and in a bedroom lace-trimmed valences, nightdress cases and lace-edged pillow slips.

Other small items such as lace gloves and handkerchiefs are pretty to display in a guest room, and it is possible to pick up odd pieces of vintage lace that you can then attach to your own fabric.

And it's not just for our homes that we like lace – for centuries it's been an essential fashion accessory.

Many people look out for pieces of old lace to use in dress-making, to add a vintage touch to a contemporary item.

Vintage lace wedding dresses sell for very good prices – providing they are in pristine condition (brides tend to want perfection on their wedding day).

A 1920s 'tea-stained' lace wedding dress sold recently on the internet for £230 and a beautiful Edwardian lace wedding dress went for £1,250.

Lace has been around for a long time – paintings show that it was used on clothing as early as the 1600s and we see portraits of Queen Elizabeth I wearing some spectacular ruffs and Marie Antoinette sporting elegant lace-trimmed dresses. Originally, lace was made from silk, linen, silver and even gold thread but gradually it became more affordable as cotton was used instead.

Hundreds of years ago lace-making was a cottage industry but in the 1800s lace-making machines were introduced, making lace much more affordable and generally available.

The 'original' lace was usually made using bobbins or needle and thread and today many 'hobby' lace-makers employ the same techniques.

Telling the difference between hand-made and machine lace can be very difficult, even for a collector.

The experts say you need a magnifying glass to identify 'clear lines' amongst the threads, this will indicate a hand-made item.

And of course, vintage lace is often sewn onto a modern piece of fabric so you get a 'marriage' of old and new.

Check the condition of very old lace before you buy it, it may have been beautifully made originally but subject to wear and tear over the years.

Perry and Phillips Auctioneers hold sales of antiques and collectables on the first Tuesday of each month. Valuation days, for sale items only, are held every Wednesday at the Mill Street saleroom, in Low Town, Bridgnorth, from 10am until 4pm.

Phew! Prom season delivers many demands



The dress has to be just perfect

THIS week is prom week in most of our schools.

A time when the school year comes to an end and the stress is no longer caused by exams but instead what to wear for the occasion of the year.

It draws to a close a crazy time of year for me where I am extremely busy with alterations and making bespoke prom dresses.

'THE dress', designed from a mix of various photos on the internet, required in a particular colour and fabric with added bling....no thought for the final cost.

Dresses purchased from websites with super model photos, the reality arriving in the wrong size, different colour, and needing various alterations.

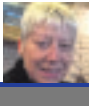
Dresses purchased from shops requiring a sleeker shape, a tighter bodice, the length shortened, the list is endless, my order book full and for the parents extremely costly.

The prom can be traced back to banquets arranged in American universities in the 19th Century held for the year's graduating class.

The word prom is short for promenade, the promenading of guests at a party.

STYLE FOCUS

with Janet Timmis



In the 1950's the traditional prom usually held in the school sports hall was replaced by a dance at local hotels and venues. During the 2000's US TV's shows made proms popular here and they become more important and more elaborate each year.

Accessories

For parents with daughters at prom age it is an expensive time and the planning amounts to weeks of detailed organising.

The dress, the hair and make-up (including a trial run), spray tan, the shoes, bag, jewellery, transport and then surprisingly, the after party dress and accessories, and the parents with sons do not escape lightly, the suit, shirt, tie and shoes have to be 'just right' and designer label.

Retailers selling garments for the prom sea-

son have to be savvy and well organised, the same dress must not be sold to more than one person attending the same event.

How often I wonder is the same dress purchased by two girls from different retailers, only to have their evening completely spoilt when they meet on the night!

I have even heard of girls not attending because the right dress just cannot be found.

Each year a trend features strongly, 2015 saw lots of red jersey dresses with beaded waists and plunging necklines.

This year navy is the outright winner, higher necklines are popular with open backs, sprinkled with diamante, straighter styles with a small train at the back or alternatively pale summery colours with full floating hem-lines and tight gathered glittering bodices worn with towering high heels.

Next year will bring another new style, a new list of challenges and many an empty wallet.

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If you keep an eye on portion sizes and avoid unhealthy additions like salt and sugar, nuts can be a healthy choice between or with your meals

Nutty discovery which can boost your health



A handful of nuts will curb your hunger

IT can be hard to get through the day without a snack or two, and all too often these come in the unhealthy form of biscuits, cakes or crisps. Want to curb between-meal hunger pangs and bolster your health in the process? Lisa Salmon makes a nutty discovery...

A handful of nuts could curb those snack-cravings – and boost your health at the same time. Not only will their concentrated protein content help you feel fuller for longer, but they could protect you from a whole host of illnesses.

A new study has found that patients with prostate cancer who consumed nuts five or more times a week after diagnosis, had a 34% lower rate of mortality than those who ate nuts less than once a month.

And last year, a Dutch study found a link between daily nut consumption and a reduced chance of dying from

Report by Karen Evans

several chronic diseases, including cancer and heart disease.

SUPER NUTS?

Nuts are packed with protein, fibre and important vitamins and minerals, including – in differing proportions depending on the type of nut – calcium, iron, zinc, magnesium, vitamin E and B vitamins and selenium, the powerful antioxidant thought to help fight cancer, and which may also play a role in combating infertility, dementia and low thyroid function.

Nuts have a high fat content, but it's the 'healthy' type – unsaturated – which is thought to help lower 'bad' LDL cholesterol levels.

Of course, a packet of roasted, salted nuts is not the same 'healthy snack' as some plain, raw almonds, for example. Dieticians advise avoiding nuts that are packaged, salted or roasted in oil or honey; instead, eat them raw or dry-roasted.

FIGHTING CANCER

Although the recent Harvard study found death rates among men with prostate cancer were more than a third less when they ate nuts regularly, it didn't conclude that eating nuts actually helped prevent men from getting prostate cancer in the first place.

However, other studies have suggested nuts – particularly walnuts – may help prevent, or at least delay, some types of cancer, including breast, prostate and colorectal.

HEARTY STUFF

Many studies have identified a link between eating nuts and reduced risk of cardiovascular problems. Harvard research found men who ate nuts at least twice a week over a year had a 47% lower risk of sudden cardiac death and a 30% lower risk of dying from all types of coronary artery disease.

It's also thought that nuts lower insulin resistance, so they help reduce the incidence of diabetes and inflammation.

£650k sale at auction for a 'doorstop' vase



Auctioneer Charles Hanson with the 'remarkable' rare Chinese vase that dates back more than 200 years

A VASE used as a doorstop in a Black Country home has fetched £650,000 at auction. The antique – described as ‘the find of a lifetime’ – sold last week.

Discovered propping a door open in a home, it was later found to be a rare Chinese artefact from the 18th century, probably made for the Emperor of China.

A round of applause filled the auction room in Derby as it sold for £650,000.

The 26-inch tall blue and white vase, made in China during the reign of Emperor Qianlong (1735-99), was spotted by Hanson's Auctioneers associate director Adrian Rathbone. The vase was passed on to the unidentified Black Country couple by a great aunt Florrie and had latterly been used as a doorstop. Luckily, it sustained no damage.

Experts believe the vase was possibly manufactured at China's imperial kilns for the Emperor's Summer Palace. Charles Hanson, of Hanson's Auctioneers, said the find was 'remarkable'.

Paintings of old Black Country on show at Portal

DRAMATIC and atmospheric paintings depicting the Black Country's industrial past will form a new exhibition in the Dudley Canal Trust's Portal building.

The exhibition of artist Ken Wood's work features paintings inspired by local views of canal-side factories and streets, as well as domestic scenes.

By using a vibrant palette, Mr Wood captures the roar of the furnaces and the thick smoggy air, as well as the lives of the workers.

"We're delighted to be able to display Ken's work in our new temporary exhibition space", said Holly Wain, heritage activities assistant at Dudley Canal

Trust. "His work is so striking and perfectly captures the atmosphere of the Black Country in years gone by."

His works have been exhibited widely and have found their way to the USA and New Zealand.

Ken said: "I have exhibited my work at several venues throughout the Black Country and beyond. So when I had the opportunity to show some of my paintings at the fabulously impressive building, the Dudley Canal Trust's Portal, I jumped at the opportunity".

The exhibition is free to visit and will run until August 22. All of the artwork will be for sale.

The write stuff

A WRITERS' workshop is being held in Halesowen Library in September

Author Mike Uden will lead the event on September 10 from 11am to 1pm.

Places can be booked by calling the library on (01384) 812982.

Mr Uden's books, which include *Dead Man Talking* and *The Sacrifice*, will be on sale.

Lorry driver caught up in Thai fake brands racket

THE name and address of a lorry driver from Brierley Hill was used by the organiser of a sophisticated operation bringing fake designer clothing into the UK.

But Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that Ralph McConnell was not the man behind the racket because he had been duped into giving his personal details while he was obtaining a visa to bring his Thai wife to this country.

Report by John Scott

"I thought he was a friend and that I was doing him a favour when he used my address. It was all going on behind my back," he told the court.

Computers belonging to the 43-year-old and members of his family were seized when trading standards officials launched an investigation into the import of bogus Ralph Lauren, Lacoste and Fred Perry Polo shirts and T-shirts from Thailand.

Mr Mark Jackson, prosecuting on behalf of Dudley Council, accepted others were involved but insisted that the defendant – who previously lived in Thailand – was a leading player in the fraud.

McConnell, whose wife works as a cleaner, conceded he realised the clothing was fake after it had been returned by disappointed customers who bought it through an internet website. However, he maintained: "I did not set it up and had no access to the bank account for the money."

He and his wife sent small amounts of cash back to family members in Thailand but the size of those payments proved he was not a major beneficiary from the fraud, argued Mr Jonathan Rose, defending.

McConnell, of Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute counterfeit goods on the basis that he was not a prime mover in the operation. He was given a nine-month prison sentence suspended for a year plus 100 hours of unpaid work.



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Battling an explosion of slimy invaders

Wet summer weather has boosted slug populations even further, HANNAH STEPHENSON discovers. She talks to experts about how to deter these slimy pests

THE explosion in the slug population predicted by wildlife experts earlier this year has been painfully evident in my garden, as the slimy critters have munched their way through beds, borders and container plants.

Venturing out each morning and evening on my constitutional slug patrol, I have picked off at least 30 of these incessant pests per session but each time I look out during or after a downpour, there they are again, climbing walls, scaling even the most thin-stemmed clematis, stripping plants of flowers and foliage and leaving their slimy trail.

There are more than 30 types of slug in the UK, some 95 per cent of which are underground, nibbling on seeds and roots and laying 20-100 eggs multiple times every year.

It is believed that the average British garden contains over 20,000 slugs and snails. Slugs remain active in temperatures of 5C and above, consuming around 40 times their weight in the space of a day.

Warnings went out much earlier in the season predicting a slug population explosion, warning that young plants are particularly vulnerable to attack, but when slugs are on the rampage and in numbers as great as they have been this year due to the mild winter and wet summer, nothing is safe.

Maturity

Paul Hetherington, director of fund-raising and communications at the charity BugLife, says: "All the anecdotal evidence points to the sheer numbers of slugs and snails this year.

"They are bigger because they have not spent time in a torpid state of hibernation, they are reaching maturity earlier because they haven't had these periods of rest when their body mass reduces, and they breed whenever they are active, not seasonally.

"When it's hot and dry they will hibernate, but because of the weather, we have seen 11 months of slug and snail activity in the UK, whereas it used to be around seven."

The changing weather patterns – mild, wet winters and wet summers – have boosted slug populations, but the situation has been exacerbated by the loss of natural predators including hedgehogs, thrushes, frogs, toads and ground beetles, which feed on slugs and help retain the balance of nature, he says.

There are plants which slugs don't like, including aquilegias, geraniums and foxgloves, which have high toxin levels.

"I've found that they prefer courgettes to pumpkins – on my allotment they've eaten all the courgettes and left the pumpkins," he says.

Deterrents include copper tape around plant pots, placing sharp sand or crushed eggshells around plants, or even building a pond or water feature which will attract toads, frogs and newts, all natural predators to the slug.

Some people recommend boiling up cloves of garlic, straining off the liquid and watering around plants with that. Other than that, it's a case of continuing with dawn and dusk patrols to pick the slugs off.

While many people opt for slug pellets, Hetherington claims that even so-called organic varieties may harm other wildlife.

Guy Barter, RHS chief horticultural adviser, says nematodes are probably the most eco-friendly solution. Parasitic nematodes occur naturally in the soil, but not enough to see off the sheer numbers of pests. They can be bought from online garden retailers. The organisms are mixed with water and then watered into the ground. Some specifically target slugs, infecting them with bacteria.

"They are an excellent idea because they have no effect on non-targeted organisms, are safe for the user and are organic. The only downside is that they are rather expensive," Barter says.

However, Hetherington points to research that has shown cases of certain nematodes crossing species, infecting bees as well, so would recommend using them only as a last resort.

If, during your slug patrols, you come across any leopard slugs – so-called for their distinctive markings – it might be better to leave them alone, as they are carnivorous and will eat other slugs.



You can grow aubergines under cover or outdoors in a sheltered spot

A taste of Mediterranean for greenhouse or patio

GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT – Aubergines

THEY are a staple of the Mediterranean, in traditional vegetable dishes such as ratatouille or the Greek speciality, moussaka, but you can grow aubergines under cover or in the garden given warm, sheltered conditions.

Sow indoors in early spring, two seeds to a pot and pinch out the weaker of the two if both appear.

They need high temperatures and plenty of light to produce a good crop, so if you have a greenhouse, grow them in there and if not, keep them in a large pot in a sunny, sheltered pot on the patio, but don't put them out until June, when all danger of frost has passed.

Pinch out the growing tip when the plant is 30cm tall to encourage more flowering side-shoots to form.

Give them regular high potash liquid feeds and plenty of water when the fruits have set to boost your chances of success and support the main stems with canes. Plants grow to about 90cm (3ft) high outdoors and should yield up

to 1.8kg (4lb) of fruit if you're lucky. Varieties worth trying include 'Black Enorma' and 'Money-maker'.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

1. Keep picking sweet peas to promote further blooms
2. Make earwig traps by filling a small plastic pot with dampened straw and placing it upside down on top of a cane at a similar height to the plants you want to protect
3. Lift and divide bearded irises
4. Keep deadheading bedding plants to keep displays looking their best
5. Remove the side buds of dahlias if you want bigger blooms
6. Plant autumn-flowering bulbs
7. Pick courgettes little and often, to stop them growing into large marrows
8. Protect carrots from carrot root fly by erecting a 60cm-tall fleece and cane fence around crops
9. Harvest damsons and plums
10. In the greenhouse, water and mist cuttings

Into the wild with tips for creating a meadow

ROSS UNDERWOOD

Head Gardener at Hodnet Hall



"Hey, Babe, Take a walk on the wild side" – Lou Reed

THERE can be few finer sights than a meadow in full floriferous glory or a spectacle more redolent of the English landscape.

It is amazing to think of the transformation in thinking amongst gardeners over the past few years from attention and admiration of wild nature to trying to emulate or even embellish it in their own gardens.

True, many people still prefer the carefully crafted look of an herbaceous, mixed or shrub border but an area of true or 'cultivated' wildness can be just as much a display of the gardeners craft.

At some point in the dim and distant past the nature that surrounded us seemed to grow smaller and we brought what we considered the best bits into close proximity to our dwelling places with because they gave us sustenance or pleasure. As more of the landscape became husbanded true wild nature adapted to our techniques or was pushed to the uncultivated periphery. With greater mechanisation and urbanisation the most desirable or fashionable plants were brought directly from the wild into our gardens with by seed, cutting or wholesale pillaging. Mechanised farming and the unrestricted use of chemicals completed mans' dominance over the wilderness. This is why people are drawn to meadows and hedgerows perhaps we find ourselves catching a glimpse of something vanished or what we imagine has disappeared tinged with the honey tones of nostalgia. Ironically much good meadow planting can be seen along the roadside where the soil has been disturbed and poor soil has been piled at the sides to make verges.

Whatever the case meadow gardening is not for the impatient gardener. Much of our richest flora grows on poor shallow soil which unless you have it has to be created by stripping away the richer topsoil down to the subsoil. For those without the means or nerve to contemplate such a drastic step then the nutrient content has to be reduced over time. The key factor is to start with a weed free area and then either sow an annual or permanent seed mix. Nettles and docks can be a problem on heavy soil and will need to be sprayed off or weeded out by hand.

The first year will see astonishing growth including pioneer species such as oxeye daisies which will gradually give way to a more stable mix over time. The grass species will settle down over time to a finer mix including common bent, crested dog tail and red Fescue. Yellow rattle (Rhinanthus major) will help weaken any invasive grasses and a mowing regime which starts with a July cut followed by close mowing will help keep on top of more vigorous species and reduce the fertility.



Meadow planting features a wide range of grasses, creating a wilder, natural look which harks back to a bygone era



Geranium pratense can be grown as plugs and planted out



Oxeye daisies will be among the first to appear

A few years need to go by before introducing bulbs and perennials such as greater knapweed or Geranium pratense which can be grown as plugs and planted into ground or scattered as seed with fingers crossed.

Aesthetically when a meadow is brought

into a garden it looks best in a semi agricultural setting such as an orchard where a froth of cow parsley beneath a flowering apple tree will make a jaw dropping sight.

Otherwise contrast the wildness with structural elements sick as clipped hedges

or topiary. If you are lucky enough to have the sort of soil that meadow flowers prefer then simply get out the deck chair, sit back and listen to the garden birds and bees humming the tune..... "Doo doo doo doo doo doo..."

Holiday homes in a beautiful setting

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

NESTLED alongside the winding river Arrow, lies the most idyllic holiday park, where holiday makers are exploring the option of investing in a caravan holiday home.

Meadow View is a luxury new development set in the heart of the beautiful Arrow Bank Holiday Park, just outside Leominster in Herefordshire.

Purchased by Glenn and Hannah Jones in 2012, Arrow Bank Holiday Park is the newest addition to the Best-parks family. Glenn and Hannah have already made many improvements to the original park and are now busy creating a 20-plot luxury holiday home and lodge development.

"The meandering River Arrow borders the park and sets a glorious scene in this picture postcard location, so expectations are high for any new projects to match the original standard," explained Glenn, who has worked tirelessly in the development of Meadow View.

Tranquil

"As it nears completion, we are so pleased with the results. The area has been designed with tasteful landscaping to encourage wildlife and to create a tranquil, unspoilt location for any owner.

"Each of the 20 spacious plots in Meadow View have been thoughtfully designed to enjoy a lakeside location and views of the wonderful countryside beyond.



The delightful and restful waterside setting of Arrow Bank Holiday Park

"No expense has been spared either – concrete bases, attractive block-paved kerbing, private stoned driveways and two large patio areas come as standard with each plot."

The jewel in the crown of Meadow View is a beautiful ornamental lake, edged with reed beds and water flowers. Wooden benches encourage you to sit and relax in this idyllic location as dragonflies dance across the water.

Meadow view is already open. "We fell in love with it instantly," explained one happy holiday home owner, adding: "As an owner here we get the best of both worlds, the peace and tranquility of this idyllic park, plus we can use the facilities at Pearl Lake, less than five minutes away. Pearl Lake is another lovely park, but with more going on – there's a golf course, fishing lake, children's facilities and a fabulous bar and restaurant."

Arrow Bank is a hidden gem at the picture postcard black and white village of Eardisland, set on the banks of the River Arrow. Some of its buildings date back to the 15th century.

Glenn said: "Our five star standard holiday park offers a welcoming retreat to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Meadow View is one of the finest new developments in the country offering everything you could desire from a holiday home location."

Whether you are new to holiday home ownership or fancy a change from your current location, get in touch for a private guided tour on 01544 388312 or email info@arrowbank.co.uk

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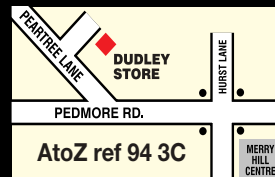
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The cruise took in several beautiful unspoilt islands



The various excursions proved to be great value



Taking in some of the breathtaking island views

Fred’s promise of enjoyment fulfilled

BROWSING through the Fred Olsen brochure I was intrigued to read of “Fred’s enjoyment promise”, an offer made to new guests.

My interest was captured when I saw the cruise itinerary on Balmoral including visits to the islands of the Azores, Cape Verdes, Canaries and Madeira, which made it easy to book.

Three days sailing on calm waters under blue skies to our first destination gave us the opportunity to relax and familiarise ourselves with the ship, it was apparent she was a refined vessel with amenities to suit all. We were impressed with presentations given on the ship’s excursions, and booked a series, which proved to be great value.

First port in the Azores was the island of Terceira, our tour took us through beautiful countryside reminiscent of our own. On a narrow road we stopped as a herd of cows refused to let us pass. I was fascinated when the herdsman shouted one word which saw them form a straight line for us to continue, if only our grandsons would react to a one word request!

The highlight was the World Heritage Site, the small town of Angra with an array of colourful Portuguese architecture and cobbled streets reflected a timeless place; in the centre a botanical garden adds to the charm.

Next the island of Sao Miguel, weaving our way through lush countryside, ablaze with hedges of hydrangeas and exotic shrubs, we reached the highest point called Sete Cidades a former volcano which crumbled quarter of a million years ago, nature’s natural development provided surroundings including forests, dales and pastures.

In the centre are two adjoining lakes unique in the fact that one is blue the other green. We stood for half an hour marvelling at nature’s best.

We left the Azores with fond memories of islands unspoilt, with landscapes breathtakingly beautiful. As Balmoral seemed to glide across the Atlantic to the Cape Verde

HOLIDAYS

By Chris Hutchinson

islands off the coast of Africa, there was much excitement from fellow passengers as a school of whales passed by at close range.

Arriving on the island of Sao Vincent our tour’s first stop was the fish market, ladies dressed in colours straight from the rainbow robustly bargaining their exotic fish, creating an exciting atmosphere, then we moved to the African market where quality goods were sold at keen prices. Arriving at Cat Fish Bay nestling between the Green Mountain and turquoise sea we were entertained by local musicians playing traditional African / Brazilian music, accompanied by dancers whose routine reflected slave warriors preparing to retaliate against slave traders. Local wine, beer and tasty delights were served, I could have watched and listened all day.

The next island Santiago, journeying into the country brought us to Cidade Elvha once a slave colony, this small village lies between two rocky gorges surrounded by tropical trees, bushes and exotic plants. Here a small church built in 1495 was visited by the great explorers Vasco da Gama and Christopher Columbus.

During sunny sailing days to the Canary Islands, I spotted turtles bobbing alongside Balmoral’s wake. We were thoroughly enjoying life on board, with a variety of things to do, or relax with a good book.

Tenerife was next, a must to visit is the inland village of Icod de Los Vinos with Mount Tiede as its backdrop.

Then it was the smaller island of La Palma, where we walked through the enchanted Laurisilva Forest, sampling local olives, cheeses and wine.

Sailing out of Madeira, our final island visit, Balmoral was joined by a group of dolphins bidding us farewell, a fitting way to end a cruise leaving us with indelible memories.

Was “Fred’s enjoyment promise” kept? It certainly was.



Something new to discover on every stop as the Balmoral continued its cruise

Get Baku to expanding city with rich history



Baku has a number of world class hotels

Spotlight on Baku

Currency: Azerbaijani New Manat

Brief overview: Described as being the architectural love child of Paris and Dubai, few cities in the world are developing as quickly as the Azerbaijan capital. Baku is where east meets west, where Europe meets Asia. The city’s rich history is prominent in Icar Sahar, its Unesco-listed Old City, which lies within an exotically crenelated arc of fortress walls. Tree-lined boulevards and exclusive boutiques lie in its hinter-

land. The city has Soviet heritage though a number of tatty old apartment blocks have been torn down and replaced by jaw-droppingly modern masterpieces that out-do Dubai. The city boasts numerous wooded parks and has an idyllic Caspian-front promenade. Baku is increasingly prominent in the world of sport and last year hosted the European Games while earlier this year it staged its first F1 Grand Prix.

Where to stay: Baku has a number of money-no-object world class hotels, including the Fairmont Baku, Four Seasons Hotel Baku and JW Marriott Hotel Absheron Baku. Others are hot on their heels and offer similarly high standards of accommodation and service, including the Jumeirah Bilgah Beach Hotel and the Kempinski Hotel Badamdar Baku.

Baku doesn’t have much of a hostel culture, so bargains are harder to come by. There are a couple of backpacker bunk rooms in private apartments and a few budget hotels offering beds in shared rooms, but the city tends to specialise in pricier hotels with friendly, well-meaning service.

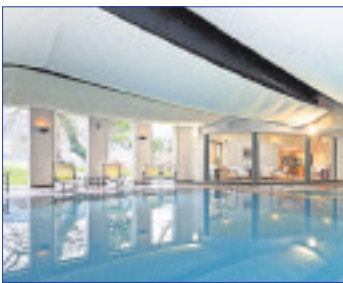
What to do: Baku has numerous points of interest, including Maiden Tower, where visitors can enjoy ballet, wine, history and art. Other popular destinations include Palace of the Shirvanshahs, Heydar Aliyev Centre, Azerbaijan Carpet Museum, Baku Museum of Modern Art, Bibi-Heybat Mosque, Bay of Baku, Nizami Museum of Azerbaijani Literature, Fountains Square, National Art Museum, Taza Pir Mosque and Azeri TV Tower. Baku is an eclectic post-Soviet city on the Caspian Sea with intriguing oddities that will have even the most world-weary of travellers tapping their toes in glee.

Where to eat/drink: Azerbaijan’s national beverage is black tea and the city has brilliant raw vegetables and herbs.

Motal pendiri is a popular white cheese while pomegranate salad is widely eaten. Lamb sadj is a popular dish and fisjinjan – meat in a sweet, dark sauce made from plums, walnuts and pomegranate molasses – is served with pilaf rice.

How to get there: Expect to get flight deals for around £200/£250 from London airports for the five-and-a-half hour flight.

Pottering around and discovering a whole new world



The Lakeside Hotel & Spa near Newby Bridge

IT was just over 100 years ago the world-famous author Beatrix Potter sought a hide-out from the smoke of London.

Today, 150 years since the author’s birth this area of the Lake District is as untouched, angelic and brilliant as the legacy from her series of books.

It is a three hour drive from the Midlands and it felt like a new world as I turned off the M6 at Kendal.

The roads are quiet, surrounded by hills and forest, and there is freshness in the air as I get out of my car at the splendid Lakeside Hotel & Spa, only a mile from Newby Bridge.

My first stop of the two-day break is Hill Top, Beatrix Potter’s paradise. My trip is to coincide with the 150th anni-

versary of Beatrix’s birth. The small working farm, run by National Trust, is filled with mementoes, antiques, furniture left by Beatrix following her death. It is now an inspiring museum, providing a glimpse of an early 20th century working farm.

After two hours exploring I get back in the car and take the short trip to Tarn Hows – a stunning circular walk with majestic mountain views over the region. The exercise provides the perfect excuse for a bite to eat, and I head to the village of Hawkshead, a village untouched by time.

Arriving back at the Lakeside Hotel, I visit the Lakes Aquarium. It features all sorts of incredible creatures and has a fascinating otter show on when I arrive.

Next I board the Windermere Lake Cruise, taking me to several miles up the lake to Bowness, which is the stop off point for Windermere – an old resort which has grown since the opening of the nearby railway in 1847.

Back at the hotel for dinner, The Lakeview Restaurant is first class. I order smoked salmon for starters – probably the best I have ever had.

Then for main course, I enjoy the Herdwick lamb shoulder, served with garden peas, chilli and mint. It is all sublime.

What a place to wind down and find simplicity and nature.

No wonder Beatrix rocked up here all those years ago.

By Alex Ross

fast the ticket

Guys and Dolls are here

Sing all about it
See Page 23



Lots of laughs
See Page 23

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For full listings see **Express & Star** every Friday

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SHOWTIME 2/4 DAYS FROM £99.95 <small>MORE DATES... travelstyletours.co.uk</small> HALF BOARD ACCOMMODATION Ticket included 6 AUG • LION KING • ALADDIN 21 AUG • DIRTY DANCING IN BLACKPOOL 3 SEP • ALADDIN • MATILDA 10 SEP • JERSEY BOYS • FUNNY GIRL 16 SEP • DANIEL O'DONNELL IN BOURNEMOUTH 17 SEP • CHICAGO THE MUSICAL & CHESTER 24 SEP • CHARLIE & CHOC FACTORY • KINKY BOOTS 1 OCT • MOTOWN • WICKED 8 OCT • SUNNY AFTERNOON • PHANTOM 15 OCT • LES MISERABLES 22 OCT • ALADDIN • LION KING 29 OCT • THE WIND AND THE WILLOWS IN SALFORD 29 OCT • MATILDA • JERSEY BOYS 5 NOV • MAMMA MIA • BEAUTIFUL 12 NOV • MOTOWN • ALADDIN <small>OR CHOOSE A MYSTERY SHOW</small>	LONGLEAT SAFARI Jungle Cruise & Bath 2 DAYS £99.95 OVERNIGHT HALF BOARD • Admission to Safari Park, Jungle Cruise, African Village, Longleat House & more plus visit to Bath SAT 27 AUG, 10 SEP, 1, 22 OCT	HOLY ISLAND, BAMBURGH & NORTHUMBERLAND 5 DAYS FROM £199.95 4 NIGHTS HALF BOARD Britannia Hotel, Woolston • Includes visits to Bamburgh, Seahouses & Holy Island, Berwick on Tweed and Cheviot Hills MON 8, 22 AUG, 12 SEP, 3 OCT	WARNER STUDIO TOUR Making of Harry Potter 2 DAYS £119.95 OVERNIGHT HALF BOARD • Admission included plus visits to Science & Natural History Museums SAT 20 AUG, 3, 24 SEP, 8 OCT, 12, 19, 26 NOV	LIVERPOOL BEATLES & CHESTER 2 for 1 BAR 6pm-9pm (TBC apply) 5 DAYS FROM £189.95 4 NIGHTS HALF BOARD Adelphi Hotel • Includes Beatles Tour & Cavern Club, Mersey River Cruise & Visit to Chester MON 25 JUL, 1, 15 AUG, 5, 19 SEP, 24 OCT, 28 NOV	TORQUAY & EDEN PROJECT 4/5 DAYS FROM £179.95 3/4 NIGHTS HALF BOARD Seascope/Barncourt Hotel • Admission included to Eden Project 4 DAYS FRI 22, 29 JUL, 5, 12, 19, 26 AUG 5 DAYS MON 25 JUL, 8, 15, 22 AUG, 5, 19 SEP	5 DAY BREAKS FROM £159.95 TORQUAY 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Aug 5, 12, 19, 26 Sep ISLE OF WIGHT 1, 8, 15, 22 Aug 5, 12, 19, 26 Sep BOURNEMOUTH 1, 8, 15, 22 Aug 5, 12, 19, 26 Sep EASTBOURNE 1, 8, 15, 22 Aug 5, 12, 19 Sep FOLKESTONE & OSTEND 1, 8, 15, 22 Aug 5, 12, 19, 26 Sep LLANDUDNO 25 JUL, 1, 8, 15 Aug 5, 19 Sep, 24 Oct, 28 Nov, 5 Dec
	ISLE OF ARRAN & LOCH LOMOND CRUISE 5 DAYS FROM £199.95 4 NIGHTS HALF BOARD Adamton House Hotel • Isle of Arran tour & Loch Lomond Cruise MON 12 SEP, 3 OCT	DON'T MISS! FLYING SCOTSMAN 2 DAYS FROM £89.95 OVERNIGHT HALF BOARD • See Flying Scotsman in steam at Shildon (Jul) Severn Valley Steam Gala (Sep). All dates include steam train ride on a Vintage Locomotive SAT 30 JUL, 24 SEP	SOUTHPORT KESWICK & SEVEN LAKES 5 DAYS £179.95 4 NIGHTS HALF BOARD Scarsbrick Hotel, Southport • Includes visits to Keswick, Kendal Market, Morecambe, Arncliffe plus Severn Lakes Circular Tour MON 25 JUL, 1, 15 AUG, 5, 19 SEP, 24 OCT	BABBACOMBE DEVON STEAM, CRUISE & CREAM TEA 5 DAYS FROM £199.95 4 NIGHTS HALF BOARD Trecarn Hotel • Includes South Devon steam train ride & River Dart cruise, plus an afternoon Devon cream tea MON 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 AUG, 5, 12 SEP, 3, 10, 24 OCT	POLAR BEARS, PENGUINS & KINGDOM OF ICE 2 DAYS £99.95 OVERNIGHT HALF BOARD • Includes admission to Yorkshire Wildlife Park, home of UK's only Polar Bears & The Deep Kingdom of Ice! SAT 6 AUG, 3 SEP, 15 OCT	

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Rufus Wainwright



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The genre-bending singer-songwriter covers favourites from his back catalogue along with highlights from his recent Take All My Love: 9 Shakespeare Sonnets album.
Visit www.thsh.co.uk

Walter Trout



Wednesday, 8pm
Robin 2, Bilston
Following recovery from a liver transplant, the award-winning American blues guitarist, formerly of Canned Heat, has just released his Alive in Amsterdam album.
Visit www.therobin.co.uk

Ocean Colour Scene



Friday & Saturday, 3.30pm
Moseley Park, B'ham
Homecoming gig for the mod rockers with support from The Twang, Reverend and the Makers, The Sherlocks and Blast Off DJs. Saturday sold out.
Visit www.moseleyfolk.co.uk/tickets/ocean-colour-scene

Sarah Millican



Saturday & Sunday, 8pm
Symphony Hall, Birmingham
The South Shields comedian brings her new show, Outsider, for two nights at this venue before returning on August 29. Be warned, she's very rude (but always polite).
Visit www.thsh.co.uk

POP

Pop Chorus Annual Show 2016
Sun at 7pm,
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

Quantic: 1000 Watts Tour
Tonight at 7pm - 10pm,
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath,
Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Russell Watson: Songs From The Heart
Thu at 7.30pm,
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
SY3 8FT.
Call 01743 281281

Rufus Wainwright
Tonight at 7pm,
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

ROCK & METAL

Catapult Club Feat. Xilla
Tomorrow at 6pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham,
B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

Ginger Wildheart
Tue at 7pm,
The Slade Rooms,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

Who's Who: The Who Tribute
Tonight at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2 Hotel, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Hayseed Dixie
Thu at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2 Hotel, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Jean Genie: David Bowie Tribute
Tomorrow at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2 Hotel, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Basement
Tonight at 7pm,
The Slade Rooms,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

David Hamilton's Rock N Roll Back The Years
Tonight at 7.30pm,
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
SY3 8FT.
Call 01743 281281

Sun Kil Moon
Tue at 7.30pm - 11pm,
The Glee Club,
Birmingham,
B5 4TD.
Call 0871 472 0400

The Stones: Rolling Stones Tribute
Tomorrow at 7pm,
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.
Call 0121 246 2273

Quill
Tonight at 7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
WV1 1DE.
Call 01902 573320

Raging Speedhorn
Wed at 7pm - 11pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham,
B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

The David Cross Band
Sun at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2 Hotel, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

JAZZ, BLUES, SOUL FUNK & MOTOWN

Justin Thurgur's Afro-Jazz Sextet
Tonight at 5pm,
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

The Drifters
Thu at 7.30pm,
Prince Of Wales Centre,
Cannock,
WS11 1DE.
Call 01543 578762

Sentimental Journey Of Jazz
Sun at 6pm - 9pm,
The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham, B16 8AE.
Call 0121 643 5858

Walter Trout
Wed at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2 Hotel, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

Joyce Moholoagae
Wed at 7.30pm - 11pm,
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

FOLK, COUNTRY & ACOUSTIC

Tinariwen
Tue at 8.30pm,
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
SY3 8FT.
Call 01743 281281

R'N'B, HIP HOP RAP & REGGAE

The Piragons: John Holt Tribute
Tonight,
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.
Call 0121 246 2273

CLASSICAL

CBSO Community Choir Showcase
Tomorrow at 7pm,
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

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Mon at 7pm, Tue at 7pm, Wed at 7pm, Thu at 7pm,
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

FESTIVALS

Birmingham And Solihull International Jazz And Blues Festival
Tonight,
Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, B15 2TS.
Call 0121 414 7333

Birmingham Jazz JQ Legends Festival
Tomorrow,
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, B3 3DH.
Call 0121 303 1966

CLUBBING

The Drum & Bass Summer Convention 2016
Tomorrow at 10pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

Propaganda
Tonight - tomorrow at 10.30pm - 1.30am,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

COMEDY

Thursday Night Comedy Carousel
Thu at 8pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD.
Call 0871 472 0400

Yeti's Demon Dive Bar
Tue at 8pm, Wed at 8pm,
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

The Best In Live Stand-up Comedy
Tonight at 8.15pm, tomorrow at 8.15pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

EdinBrum Previews: Jollyboat & Gavin Webster
Thu at 7.30pm,
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Ken Dodd: The Happiness Show
Tomorrow at 7pm, Sun at 7pm,
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, SY3 8FT. Call 01743 281281

Sarah Millican: Outsider
Tomorrow at 8pm - 10pm, Sun at 8pm - 10pm, £25 - £26
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

THEATRE

Sasha Regan's All Male HMS Pinafore
Mon at 7.30pm, Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 2.30pm, 7.30pm,
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, SY3 8FT.
Call 01743 281281

Dogfight
Tonight at 7.30pm, Tomorrow at 7.30pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT.
Call 01785 254653

Much Ado About Nothing
Tomorrow at 7.30pm,
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Doreen's Grand Night Out
Tonight at 7.30pm,
Lichfield Garrick, WS13 6HR.
Call 01543 412121

Once Upon A Time: Dance Connection
Sun at 2pm, 6pm,
Oakengates Theatre, Telford, TF2 6EP.
Call 01952 382382

The Musicals: TACT
Tonight at 7.30pm, tomorrow at 7.30pm,
Oakengates Theatre, Telford, TF2 6EP.
Call 01952 382382

Elmhurst Dance School
Tonight at 7pm, Tomorrow at 2pm,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP.
Call 0121 236 4455

Macbeth
Sun at 7.30pm,
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Les Miserables: School Edition: Get Your Wiggle On
Tonight at 7.30pm, Tomorrow at 1pm, 6.30pm, Sun at 1pm, 6.30pm,
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, SY3 8FT.
Call 01743 281281

Forever In Blue Jeans
Tomorrow at 7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE.
Call 01902 573320

The Chris And Pui Show
Tomorrow at 11am, 2pm,
Lichfield Garrick, WS13 6HR.
Call 01543 412121

Guys And Dolls
Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, Thu at 2.30pm, 7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Showstopper! The Improvised Musical
Tonight at 7.30pm,
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Mamma Mia!
Tonight at 7.30pm - 10pm, Tomorrow at 2.30pm - 5.30pm, Mon at 7.30pm - 10pm, Tue at 7.30pm - 10pm, Wed at 2.30pm - 5.30pm, 7.30pm - 10pm, Thu at 7.30pm - 10pm, £28 - £60
Birmingham Hippodrome, B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

GALLERIES & EXHIBITIONS

Antiques For Everyone Summer Fair
Thu at 11am - 5pm,
The NEC Birmingham, B40 1NT.
Call 0121 780 4141

Land, Sea And Air
Tomorrow at 10am - 5pm, Sun at 12pm - 4pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 11am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,
The New Art Gallery Walsall, WS2 8LG. Call 01922 654400

Ruth Claxton Exhibition
Tomorrow at 10am - 5pm, Sun at 12pm - 4pm,
The New Art Gallery Walsall, WS2 8LG. Call 01922 654400

Kan Xuan
Tomorrow at 11am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Tue at 11am - 5pm, Wed at 11am - 5pm, Thu at 11am - 5pm,
Ikon Gallery, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS.
Call 0121 248 0708

Jesse Bruton
Tomorrow at 11am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Tue at 11am - 5pm, Wed at 11am - 5pm, Thu at 11am - 5pm,
Ikon Gallery, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS.
Call 0121 248 0708

All The World's A Stage
Tomorrow at 10am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,
Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, B15 2TS.
Call 0121 414 7333

Inspire 16: The Young Creatives Of Birmingham
Sun at 10am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, B3 3DH.
Call 0121 303 1966

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Guys and Dolls? That's just Grand



Sit Down You're Rockin' The Boat – Guys and Dolls is coming to Wolverhampton photo by Johan Persson

A MUCH-LOVED show that is currently taking London's West End by storm is coming to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

London's hit revival of Guys and Dolls has Hollywood star Rebel Wilson as nightclub singer Miss Adelaide but the touring production doesn't lack West End quality, with Wicked star Louise Dearman – who uniquely has played both Elphaba and Glinda in that hit show – in the starring role.

Burrows, Swerling and Loesser's sizzling New York tale of gamblers,

gangsters and nightclub singers features some of Broadway's greatest show-stopping tunes. These include Luck Be a Lady, Sit Down You're Rockin' the Boat and My Time of Day.

This revival also benefits from dazzling choreography by world-renowned Cuban ballet star Carlos Acosta with top choreographer Andrew Wright

Richard Fleeshman, known to thousands of soap fans as Coronation Street's Craig Harris plays Sky Masterson and is a West End favour-

ite after starring opposite Sheridan Smith in Legally Blonde.

Movie, TV and stage star Maxwell Caulfield plays Nathan Detroit. Maxwell's film credits include Grease 2, The Colbys, Chicago in London and Singin' in the Rain during its UK tour. Anna O'Byrne plays Sarah Brown and her previous credits include The Phantom Of The Opera and Love Never Dies.

Tickets are sale online at grandtheatre.co.uk or can be purchased by calling the box office on 01902 429212.



'I don't take myself too seriously'

From Basra to Brierley Hill

PAUL Tonkinson may be a self-proclaimed 'professional northerner' living in London but it's in the Midlands where he really feels at home.

"It's always been one of my favourite places to gig," he says. "I just seem to get on there, the crowd always seem really relaxed. They don't take themselves too seriously, which I like, because I don't take myself too seriously either."

The 46-year-old from Scarborough says he is looking forward to taking the stage at Brierley Hill Civic Hall on Saturday night, appearing alongside Doc Brown and The Fizzogs for the first instalment of Live At The Civic, a new comedy night featuring TV names alongside top local talent.

Some 500 tickets have already been sold for the gig, not that it will faze Tonkinson, who supported Michael McIntyre on his record-breaking 50-date Happy and Glorious arena tour. McIntyre hand-picked the award-winning comic, a two-time winner of Time Out Comedian of the Year who also briefly co-presented Channel 4's The Big Breakfast.

The arenas were a far cry from the makeshift stages in war-torn Afghanistan and Iraq, where Tonkinson has been a regular visitor to entertain the troops. "It's scary sometimes but the gigs over there are fantastic," he says. "I did some gigs in Basra at the height of the mortar attacks. You would be on stage and everyone would hear a noise and throw themselves to the ground, myself included. Then you would just get up and carry on with your set."

Tickets on 0870 320 7000 or www.bhillcivic.co.uk/whats-on/comedy

Summer in the city means all that jazz

THE 32nd Birmingham & Solihull Jazz & Blues Festival starts tomorrow (Friday), offering more than 200 performances in some 90 venues in ten days – and the vast majority of the gigs are free.

The best of homegrown jazz talent will rub shoulders with acts from the USA and Canada, India and across Europe from Spain to Lithuania.

There will also be dance and music workshops, exhibitions and plenty of chances to meet the musicians.

For details see www.birminghamjazzfestival.com, see the festival's Facebook page or call 0121 454 7020.

Pop chorus put new twist on chart hits

FROM The Beatles to Boyzone and ELO to Olly Murs, the 190 adults and children of Solihull Pop Chorus are set to raise the roof at Birmingham Town Hall on Sunday at 7pm. They will be performing their uplifting versions of some best-loved pop classics in their annual show.

Created in 2013 by choir director Anya Small, Solihull Pop Chorus brings together amateur singers ranging in age from six to 70, many of whom had never sung in public before – and the result is magical. The choir is now in high demand.

Tickets cost £17. See www.thsh.co.uk or call 0121 780 3333.

Ruthie sings songs from the top shows

WEST End star Ruthie Henshall is the special guest in song and dance show That's Entertainment at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, July 23.

The Olivier Award winning actress and musical theatre star, who had major roles in Crazy For You, Chicago and most recently Billy Elliot the Musical, will be joining the celebration of show tunes from the 1930s, 40s and 50s. It features such songs as That's Entertainment, Puttin' On The Ritz and There is Nothing like a Dame, and there is also a knees-up tribute to London's Pearly Kings and Queens.

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Chloe Howman

Casualty

(BBC1, 9.25pm)

Rita receives a frosty reception from her colleagues after her lies to Iain were revealed, but everyone must put aside their animosity when a pair of love-rivals are admitted to the ED after a scuffle at a hotel leaves them both impaired on the same spike. Meanwhile, Jez is so busy showing off that he forgets to fill the ambulance with petrol. Connie considers telling Grace about her relationship with Jacob, and Robyn is devastated following her break-up with Glen. Chloe Howman, Michael Stevenson, Derek Thompson, Jaye Griffiths, Amanda Mealing and Charles Venn star.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Mary Berry's Absolute Favourites. (R) **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** Athletics: Diamond League Highlights. **2.15** Jessica Ennis-Hill - A Coach's Story. **2.45** Live Davis Cup Tennis: Serbia v Great Britain. **5.45** BBC News. **5.55** Regional Programme.

6.00 Pointless Celebrities. Ruth Badger, Solomon Aklatar, Carl Fogarty, Jimmy Bullard, Craig Phillips, Nikki Graham, Jamie Laing and Alex Mytton compete in a reality TV-themed edition of the quiz show. (R)

6.50 The Getaway Car. Five more duos hit the track in South Africa this week, including a retired husband-and-wife from Somerset, a pair of chatty sisters from Ulster and all-singing friends from Kent.

7.40 The National Lottery: In It to Win It. Quiz show in which five contestants answer questions to scoop a big cash prize. Includes the Lotto and Thunderball draws. Last in the series.

8.30 The Musketeers. The heroes' pursuit of Grimaud leads them to a battle-scarred village inhabited solely by women, where they struggle to win the trust of the community's cunning leader, who seems to be hiding something from them. When the town is attacked by a band of war deserters, the Musketeers must persuade the women to let them help in fighting back, only to uncover the dark secret at the heart of the village's history. Meanwhile, at the Louvre, Anne makes a bold confession to secure her son's future. Guest starring Meera Syal.

9.25 Casualty. Rita receives a frosty reception from her colleagues, while Jez forgets to fill the ambulance with petrol. Robyn is gutted after her break-up with Glen.

10.15 BBC News: Weather; National Lottery Update.

10.35 Film: Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest. (2006) Captain Jack Sparrow battles to save his soul from the legendary Davy Jones and his fearsome sea monster. Swashbuckling adventure sequel, starring Johnny Depp and Orlando Bloom.

12.55 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.00** BBC News.

BBC2

6.05 The Women's Football Show. (R) **6.35 Film:** Once Upon a Honeymoon. (1942) **8.25 Film:** Ivanhoe. (1952) **10.10** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **11.10** Natural World - Snow Monkeys. (R) **12.00** The Hairy Bikers' Northern Exposure. (R) **1.00 Film:** The Gaine Mutiny. (1954) Second World War naval drama, starring Humphrey Bogart. **3.00** Coast. (R) **4.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.45** Flog It! (R) **5.45** Live Davis Cup Tennis. Serbia v Great Britain.

7.00 Gardeners' World. Monty Don demonstrates that it is not too late to starting growing vegetables and explains which types can be sown now, before sinking plants in pots into the borders of the Spring Garden. Plus, a hosta National Collection holder shares the secrets of his propagating success, and Rachel de Thame visits theatre impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh's garden. (R)

7.30 Dad's Army. Wilson allows the vicar and the verger to enlist in the Home Guard while Mainwaring is in hospital, but their over-enthusiastic approach to man-management brings the wrath of Warden Hodges down upon the platoon. Comedy, first shown in 1973, starring Arthur Lowe, John Le Mesurier and Bill Pertwee. (R)

8.00 Golf: The Open Championship. Hazel Irvine presents highlights of the third day of the prestigious event, which takes place at Royal Troon Golf Club in Ayrshire. The biggest story of the third round last year at St Andrews was surely Irish amateur Paul Dunne's rise to a share of first place following a fine six-under-par round of 66. He was in illustrious company at the top of the leaderboard alongside PGA Championship title-holder Jason Day and the 2010 victor in this tournament, Louis Oosthuizen, while Jordan Spieth was just one stroke behind.

10.00 The Rack Pack. Comedy drama based on the glory days of professional snooker in the 1980s and the rivalry between Alex "Hurricane" Higgins and Steve Davis. Luke Treadaway and Will Merrick star.

11.30 Film: Youth in Revolt. (2009) Comedy, starring Michael Cera and Portia Doubleday.

12.55 Film: Repo Chick. (2009) **2.20** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: The Aquabats! Super Show! **6.20** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.30** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.35** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.00** Ninjago: Rise of the Snakes. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.20** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **12.20** ITV News; Weather. **12.25** The Wine Show. **1.30** Big Box Little Box. (R) **2.00** Doc Martin. (R) **3.00** The Chase. (R) **4.00** Midsummer Murders. (R)

6.00 Regional Programme; Weather. **6.15** ITV News; Weather.

6.30 You've Been Framed! Harry Hill narrates another selection of comical mishaps filmed by viewers, including an unusual take on Ninja Warrior UK, a preview of what Ant and Dec might look like in their sixties, and a fine example of why riding a bicycle is not the best time to take a selfie. Plus, a family is soaked by what appears to be an exploding colon. (R)

7.00 Catchphrase. Stephen Mulhern hosts the game show, asking three contestants to "see it and say it" as they try to guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues. After the first elimination, the two remaining players battle to reach the Super Catchphrase round, where one of them could win £50,000.

7.45 Film: The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug. (2013) Premiere. The party of dwarves and their hobbit ally continue the quest to reclaim their lost kingdom, journeying through the forest home of ancestral enemy the elves and finally facing the dragon that drove them from their home. Meanwhile, Gandalf the wizard investigates the rise of a mysterious dark power. Part two of Peter Jackson's fantasy adventure trilogy based on J.R.R. Tolkien's novel, starring Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Richard Armitage and Orlando Bloom.

10.45 ITV News; Weather.

11.05 Film: Carry On Up the Jungle. (1970) A Victorian explorer recalls his expedition to tropical Africa in search of a rare bird, where he discovered an all-female tribe. Comedy, starring Sid James and Frankie Howerd.

12.45 Jackpot247. Interactive gaming. **3.00** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The King of Queens. (R) **6.35** Motor Sport: British GT. **7.00** Gillette World Sport. **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.55** Dare to Believe: Natasha Baker. (R) **9.00** The Morning Line. **10.00** Car SOS. **11.00** The Superhumans Show. **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.00** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Newbury, Newmarket and Market Rasen. **4.30** A Place in the Sun: Summer Sun. **5.30** Channel 4 News. **5.55** Dare to Believe: Ali Jawad. (R).

6.00 Gogglesprogs. Young TV viewers watch a range of programmes, from entertainment shows to documentaries and classic films, as well as up-to-the-minute news reports. In this instalment, the youngsters offer their honest and hilarious views on Wallace and Gromit, The Getaway Car and 24 Hours in A&E. (R)

7.00 Film: Star Trek. (2009) The trainee crew members of the starship Enterprise embark on their maiden flight, which pits them against a Romulan commander from the future who is planning a horrific revenge on those he blames for a tragedy in his own time. Sci-Fi adventure based on the original TV series, starring Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Eric Bana, Zoe Saldana and Leonard Nimoy.

9.30 Film: Shutter Island. (2010) A US marshal, traumatised by his past, heads to a hospital for the criminally insane on a remote island to investigate the disappearance of a woman who murdered her children. As the case unfolds, he begins to suspect the doctors are hiding something - and that a grisly fate awaits all the patients on a sinister ward. Martin Scorsese's mystery thriller, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Ruffalo and Ben Kingsley.

12.10 Dare to Believe: Jordanne Whitley. A profile of the British wheelchair tennis player. (R) **12.15** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. Part one of two. The Burger Kitchen in Los Angeles. (R) **1.05** Film: Something in the Air. (2012) Drama, starring Clement Mlayeur. **3.05** Hollyoaks: Omnibus. She prepares for his first working day at The Bean and is determined to stay clean, until Cameron tries to lead him back into temptation. (R) **5.10** Fifteen to One. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.25** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **9.00** The Saturday Show Live. **11.10** Police Interceptors: The Fatal Four. (R) **12.10** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.10** Police Interceptors. (R) **2.10** World's Strongest Man. (R) **3.10** World's Strongest Man. (R) **4.05** World's Strongest Man. (R) **5.05** World's Strongest Man. (R)

6.05 World's Strongest Man. Europe's Strongest Man. Action from the contest, which took place at Headingley, where one favourite Eddie Hall and 2014 champion Hafthor Bjornsson were among those taking part. Presented by James Richardson, Charlie Webster and Terry Hollands. (R)

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v Pakistan. Mark Nicholas presents action from the third day of the First Test in the four-match series, which took place at Lord's. With commentary by Geoffrey Boycott, Michael Vaughan and Simon Hughes.

8.00 NCIS. Part one of two. A Naval intelligence ensign is killed in an unusual car accident. Gibbs and his team are reunited with old friend Ned Dornegut, who is now working with NCIS cyber operations, and NSA attorney Jake Malloy to investigate the case, and discover a conspiracy involving terrorist recruitment on the internet.

8.55 5 News Weekend. **9.00 Big Brother.** Highlights of another 24 hours in the Big Brother house, following the housemates as they recover from the week-long Annihilation theme and react to Friday night's "eviction massacre". Narrated by Marcus Bentley.

10.00 Bellator Fight Night: Live from London. Paul Daley v Douglas Lima. Coverage from the Q2 Arena in London, where the Welterweight clash is the scheduled main event for Bellator 158.

12.00 SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **3.10** Big Brother. Daily round-up of highlights. (R) **4.00** Puppies Make You Laugh Out Loud. Clip show featuring entertaining pups. (R) **4.50** Divine Designs. Two notable Victorian architects. (R) **5.15** House Doctor. A bland property near Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. (R) **5.40** Angels of Jarm. Angel Mick helps at a playgroup picnic. (R) **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Crossing England in a Punt: River of Dreams. **8.00** Who Were the Greeks? **9.00** Beck: The Japanese Painting **10.30** Sinatra: All or Nothing at All **12.25** Sing the Great American Songbook **1.25** The Secret Life of Bob Monkhouse **2.55** Top of the Pops: 1982 **3.35** Close

ITV2

12.05 Catchphrase Celebrity Couples Special **1.05** Ninja Warrior UK **2.05** Film: Kindergarten Cop (1990) **3.05** FYI Daily **3.10** Film: Kindergarten Cop (1990) **4.15** Film: Back to the Future Part III (1990) **5.15** FYI Daily **5.20** Film: Back to the Future Part III (1990) **6.40** Film: You've Got Mail (1998) **7.40** FYI Daily **7.45** Film: You've Got Mail (1998) **9.00** Film: Shaun of the Dead (2004) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** Film: Shaun of the Dead (2004) **11.05** Family Guy **12.35** American Dad! **1.30** The Cleveland Show **2.55** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

12.50 Foyle's War **3.05** Film: George and Mildred: The Movie (1980) **4.05** FYI Daily **4.10** Film: George and Mildred: The Movie (1980) **4.55** The Zoo **7.00** Doc Martin **8.00** Lewis **10.00** A Touch of Frost **12.00** The Jury **1.05** City Lights **1.55** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

11.55 BRDC Formula 3 Championship Highlights **1.00** Tour de France Highlights **2.00** Tour de France Live. Coverage of stage 14 of this year's race. **4.30** Storage Wars **4.55** Monster Carp **6.00** The Motorbike Show **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.00** Film: For Your Eyes Only (1981) **9.10** FYI Daily **9.15** Film: For Your Eyes Only (1981) **10.45** Film: Out for Justice (1991) **11.45** FYI Daily **11.50** Film: Out for Justice (1991) **12.35** Motorway Patrol **1.00** Tour de France Highlights **2.00** The Wine Show **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

12.30 New Girl **1.00** The Goldbergs **2.00** Film: Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel (2009) **3.45** Rude (sh) Tube Shorts **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: The A-Team (2010) **11.25** Gogglebox **1.35** Rude Tube **3.25** The New Normal **4.05** Rude (sh) Tube

Film4

11.00 Lifeboat (1944) **1.00** Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (2004) **3.05** Percy Jackson & the Lightning Thief (2010) **5.20** Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters (2013) **7.20** Airplane! (1980) **9.00** Bridesmaids (2011) **11.25** Magic Mike (2012) **1.40** The Squad (2011) **3.55** Close

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CHOICE



The Secret Agent (BBC1, 9pm)
New series. Adaptation of Joseph Conrad's novel, starring Toby Jones as a shopkeeper in Victorian London who is secretly a spy monitoring anarchist groups for the Russian government, a double life is wife does not suspect. He is ordered by his superiors to arrange a bombing that will be blamed on the British government to crack down on them, and is forced to recruit his brother-in-law as an accomplice. With Vicky McClure, Ian Hart, Stephen Graham and Charlie Hamblett.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News. **Weather. 1.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **1.45** Live Davis Cup Tennis. **5.15** Songs of Praise. **5.50** Pointless Celebrities. (R) **6.35** BBC News. **6.50** Regional Programme. **7.00** **Countryfile**. The team takes a look at Britain's meadows, and the wildlife and plants that thrive in them. Matt Baker gets a lesson in cutting hay from the national female scything champion, while Naomi Wilkinson meets an artist who paints meadow landscapes, visits an RSPB site set up to provide a habitat for birds and insects, and discovers how meadows are proving a popular site for burials. John Craven discovers the folklore behind the healing properties of meadow plants, and Tom Heap investigates the lack of affordable housing in rural areas. **8.00** **Fake or Fortune?** New series. Fiona Bruce and art expert Philip Mould investigate a portrait of a man wearing a black cravat painted in 1939, which the owner believes is an early work of Lucian Freud, from his time at the Central School of Art – even though Freud himself denied painting it. The team tries to uncover who the mysterious man in the painting was, whether it really was painted by Freud, and if so, why did he claim that it was not his work. The investigation digs up a complex history of feuds, rivalry and intrigue. **9.00** **The Secret Agent**. New series. Adaptation of Joseph Conrad's novel, starring Toby Jones as a shopkeeper in Victorian London who is secretly a spy monitoring anarchist groups for the Russian government. **10.00** BBC News. **10.20** Regional Programme. **10.30** **Olympic Imagine Special: One Night in 2012**. Alan Yentob looks back at the 2012 Olympics opening ceremony, with Danny Boyle and the creative team explaining the challenges that went into creating 'The Greatest Show on Earth'. **12.10** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.15** BBC News.

BBC2

6.30 Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.00** The Beechgrove Garden. **8.30** **Countryfile**. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. (R) **11.00** Tom Kerridge's Best Ever Dishes. (R) **11.30** A Cook Abroad: Rick Stein's Australia. (R) **12.30** Triathlon. **1.45** Film: Kidnapped. (1960) Historical adventure, starring Peter Finch. **3.15** Kangaroo Dundee and Other Animals – Part 1: Natural World. (R) **4.15** Kangaroo Dundee and Other Animals – Part 2: Natural World. (R) **5.15** Pig It! (R) **6.00** **Attenborough's Life That Glows**. David Attenborough explores the world of bioluminescence, the often spectacular natural light produced by creatures including glow-worms, fireflies and plankton, using specially designed cameras, some fitted to a new generation of deep-sea submersibles and robots to record instances in the very deep ocean. The programme shows a millipede glowing on the forest floor in California, the mesmerising flashing light patterns of the synchronously firefly, the spooky glow of a rare dragon fish and luminous earth worms in France. (R) **7.00** **Trust Me, I'm a Doctor – Summer Special**. Skin surgeon Gabriel Weston tests the effectiveness of protective sun creams and Michael Mosley investigates ways to get the benefits of exercise without doing any at all. (R) **8.00** **Golf: The Open Championship**. Hazel Irvine presents action from the fourth and final day of the prestigious event, which took place at Royal Troon Golf Club in Ayrshire. The battle for the Claret Jug could hardly have been closer at St Andrews last year, with two of the world's finest players in Jason Day and Jordan Spieth both finishing one stroke off the top of the leaderboard, while Zach Johnson, Marc Leishman and Louis Oosthuizen contested a four-hole play-off. It was Johnson who was to emerge victorious, adding the Major to the Masters title he won in 2007. **10.00** Film: **A Long Way Down**. (2014) Premiere. Comedy drama, with Pierce Brosnan and Toni Collette. **11.30** **Mock the Week**. (R) **12.00** Film: **In a Better World**. (2010) **1.55** Sign Zone: **Countryfile**. (R) **2.50** **Holby City**. (R) **3.50** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: The Aquabats! Super Show! **6.20** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.30** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Oddbods. (R) **7.35** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.00** Teen Titans Go! (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.20** Judge Rinder. (R) **12.20** ITV News: Weather. **12.25** Rebound. (R) **1.25** Long Lost Family. (R) **2.25** Love Your Garden. (R) **3.30** Midsomer Murders. (R) **5.30** Masterpiece with Alan Titchmarsh. (R) **6.30** **Regional Programme**: Weather. **6.45** **ITV News**: Weather. **7.00** **The Chase: Celebrity Special**. Former dancer on Ice judge Karen Barber, TV presenter Dick Strawbridge, Coronation Street's Catherine Tidy (Eva Price) and comedian Russell Kane compete to win thousands of pounds for charity by pitting their general knowledge against one of the show's resident trivia experts. However, they must work as a team to build their prize pot and stay one step ahead of the Chaser. Bradley Walsh hosts. (R) **8.00** **It'll Be Alright on the Night**. Griff Rhys Jones presents another selection of outtakes from popular TV series, featuring stars including Mary Berry, Paul O'Grady and Ant & Dec, as well as Ian McKellen and Derek Jacobi experiencing some memorable mishaps on the set of *Vicious*. (R) **9.00** Film: **Casino Royale**. (2006) James Bond achieves his '00' status and is dispatched on the trail of Le Chiffre, an international criminal financing terrorist organisations around the world. Bond's investigation leads to a casino in Montenegro, where he takes part in a high-stakes poker game in a bid to bankrupt Le Chiffre and put an end to his plans. Spy thriller, directed by Martin Campbell and starring Daniel Craig in his first outing as 007, with Eva Green, Mads Mikkelsen, Judi Dench and Giancarlo Giannini. **10.30** **ITV News**: Weather. **10.45** Film: **Casino Royale**. (2006) Concluded. **12.05** River Monsters. (R) **12.30** Jackpot247. Interactive gaming. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** British Superbike Championship Highlights. **4.45** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Shipping Wars. (R) **6.25** Shipping Wars. (R) **6.45** The King of Queens. (R) **7.10** The King of Queens. (R) **7.35** The King of Queens. (R) **8.00** Frasier. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Dare to Believe: Jordanne Whitley. (R) **12.35** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **1.35** Film: Hairspray. (2007) Musical comedy, starring Nikki Blonsky and John Travolta. **3.50** Location, Location, Location. (R) **4.50** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **5.50** Dare to Believe: Jordanne Whitley. (R) **5.55** Channel 4 News. **6.15** Film: **The Lion King**. (1994) A lion prince blames himself for his father's death and flees into the wilderness, leaving his wicked uncle to take over. As the cub grows to adulthood, he receives a vision of the dead king, who inspires him to seek revenge and reclaim his rightful throne. Disney animated musical, with the voices of Matthew Broderick, Jeremy Irons, Rowan Atkinson, Whoopi Goldberg and James Earl Jones. **8.00** Film: **The Norse God**. (2011) Premiere. The Norse god of thunder is banished from his own world when his arrogance puts the kingdom on the brink of war. He is sent to present-day Earth, where he is forced to live among humans without his supernatural powers, but must regain his abilities to defend his new home against his evil brother. Kenneth Branagh's fantasy adventure based on the Marvel comics, starring Chris Hemsworth, Natalie Portman, Tom Hiddleston and Anthony Hopkins. Edited for violence. **10.15** Film: **Dredd**. (2012) A law enforcer in a post-apocalyptic city must fight his way out of a tower block dominated by a ruthless crime lord. Sci-fi thriller, starring Karl Urban and Lena Headey. **12.05** Dare to Believe: Jack Rutter. (R) **12.10** Film: **Brotherhood**. (2012) Cutting Edge. Documentary exploring the wealth gap in Britain. (R) **1.05** Date My Mum. Children choose prospective partners for their mothers. (R) **2.05** Dogs: Their Secret Lives. The results of the online survey launched in the series. (R) **3.00** Posh Pawn. James heads to Lanzarote to tackle the sale of a yellow submarine. (R) **3.55** French Collection. (R) **4.50** Dare to Believe: Ali Jawad. (R) **4.55** Fifteen to One. (R) **5.50** Draw It! (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina: The Next Steps. (R) **6.30** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.40** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.50** Zack and Quack. (R) **7.05** Pets. (R) **7.10** Noddy in Toyland. (R) **7.20** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.35** Little Princess. (R) **7.45** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.00** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.30** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.45** Shimmer and Shine. **9.10** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** Now That's Funny! (R) **11.25** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud. **3** (R) **12.25** Film: Innerspace. (1987) Sci-fi comedy, starring Dennis Quaid. **2.40** Film: Three Men and a Cradle. (1987) Comedy starring Tom Selleck, Ted Danson and Steve Guttenberg. **4.35** Film: Willow. (1988) Fantasy adventure, starring Warwick Davis. **7.00** **Cricket on 5**. England v Pakistan. Mark Nicholas presents action from the fourth day of the First Test in the four-match series, which took place at Lord's. With commentary by Geoffrey Boycott, Michael Vaughan and Simon Hughes. **8.00** **Now That's Funny!** Featuring videos of people trying to stay calm under pressure, including two brothers who trick their sister into thinking they are under attack from zombies, and a bad-tempered father trying to solve a riddle. **8.55** 5 News Weekend. **9.00** **Big Brother**. Daily round-up of highlights, revealing how the housemates are getting on under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary-room visits and bedroom chat-chat. **10.00** **20 Moments that Rocked the 80s**. Cherie Lunghi presents a countdown of memorable moments, including royal weddings, political scandals, sporting triumphs and the rise to fame of iconic entertainers. (R) **11.30** **The 80s: The Best of Bad TV**. A look back at memorable TV highlights from the 1980s, focusing on the best and worst that the decade had to offer, including the infamous 1989 Brit Awards. (R) **12.50** Lip Sync Battle. (R) **1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** GPs: Behind Closed Doors. (R) **4.00** Now That's Funny! (R) **4.50** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Concerto at the BBC Proms **7.30** BBC Proms 2016: Faust Requiem **9.40** Britain's Wild Plants **10.00** K2: The Killer Summit: Storyville **11.25** Timeshift: Of Ice and Men **12.25** Rich Hall's You Can Go to Hell, I'm Going to Texas **1.55** Horizon: Who's Afraid of a Big Black Hole? **2.55** Bullseyes and Beers – When Darts Hit Britain: Timeshift **3.55** Close **ITV2**
12.25 Take Me Out **1.35** The Cube: Celebrity Special **2.35** Catchphrase **3.35** Film: The Flintstones (1994) **4.35** FYI Daily **4.40** Film: The Flintstones (1994) **5.20** Film: Nanny McPhee (2005) **6.20** FYI Daily **6.25** Film: Nanny McPhee (2005) **7.15** Film: Liar Liar (1997) **8.15** FYI Daily **8.20** Film: Liar Liar (1997) **9.00** Love Island: Heading Home **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.30** The Cleveland Show **1.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **1.55** Planet's Funniest Animals **2.20** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV3 Nightscreen **ITV3**
2.20 Wyclef **3.30** The Zoo **4.40** Film: The Belles of St Trinian's (1954) **5.30** FYI Daily **5.35** Film: The Belles of St Trinian's (1954) **6.25** Rosemary & Thyme **8.00** Midsomer Murders **10.00** Lewis **12.00** Wire in the Blood **2.05** A Touch of Frost **3.45** May the Best House Win **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen **ITV4**
11.00 Tour de France Highlights **12.00** Tour de France Live. Coverage of stage 15 of this year's race. **5.00** Storage Wars **5.55** The Wine Show **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.00** River Monsters **9.00** Film: Tin Cup (1996) **10.10** FYI Daily **10.15** Film: Tin Cup (1996) **11.45** Film: The Client (1994) **12.50** FYI Daily **12.55** Film: The Client (1994) **2.05** Tour de France Highlights **3.00** Teleshopping **E4**
2.00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine **3.00** The Big Bang Theory **5.00** Rude (ish) Tube Shorts **5.15** Film: Independence Day (1996) **8.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Tatoo Fixers **12.10** Rich Kids of Instagram **1.15** Containment **2.10** Gogglebox **3.05** 2 Broke Girls **3.45** Hollyoaks **Film4**
11.00 The Bedford Incident (1965) **1.00** Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs (2009) **2.50** Ice Age: Continental Drift (2012) **4.35** Imagine That (2009) **6.55** St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold (2009) **9.00** Identity Thief (2013) **11.15** Mindscape (2013) **1.10** Like Someone in Love (2012) **2.30** Close

SUMMER FUN

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

Kidnapping Lizzie: Nightmare Visions, Channel 5, 3.15pm
When 15-year-old Lizzie is kidnapped, a psychic comes forward claiming to know the teenager's whereabouts, but it soon becomes clear she has an agenda of her own. Thriller, starring Nadia Bjorlin, Richard Ruccolo and Vanessa Evigan. (2016)

TUESDAY

Dark Secrets, Channel 5, 3.10pm
A young woman becomes increasingly suspicious of the motives of her older room-mate. Thriller, starring Boti Bliss, Ashley Leggat and William R Moses. (2011)

WEDNESDAY

Sanctum, Channel 4, 1.30am
A team of divers exploring a system of undersea caves becomes trapped and must find a way through the caverns to the surface. Thriller, starring Richard Roxburgh and Ioan Gruffudd. (2011)

THURSDAY

Columbo: The Bye-Bye Sky-High IQ Murder Case, ITV, 11.40pm
One of the world's cleverest men plots the perfect murder, but must pit his wits against Columbo's equally sharp mind. Crime drama, with Peter Falk and Theodore Bikel. (1977)



Wanderlust, Friday, Channel 4, 12.10am

FRIDAY

Total Recall, ITV, 10.40pm
A construction worker pays to have fake memories of a dream holiday implanted into his brain, but discovers his mind has already been tampered with – apparently to erase his true identity as a secret agent from a colony on Mars. Paul Verhoeven's sci-fi thriller, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Michael Ironside. (1990)

Wanderlust, Channel 4, 12.10am

A Manhattan resident loses his job, so he and his wife leave the city in search of a fresh start. During their journey, they stumble on a commune of hippies and decide to join until they have decided what to do with their lives. Comedy, starring Jennifer Aniston, Paul Rudd and Alan Alda. (2012)

New Zealand's weird and wonderful creatures

New Zealand's breathtaking scenery and landscapes have been used as the setting for various big-budget films over recent years, including Wolverine, The World's Fastest Indian, The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe, Whale Rider, The Piano and, of course, Peter Jackson's The Lord of the Rings and Hobbit sagas.

New Zealand brought all of those and other acclaimed films to life, and you even could say the country has become a silent movie star in its own right.

Isolated from the rest of the world since the time of the dinosaurs, the Land of the Long White Cloud has been left to its own devices for 80 million years, with an array of surprising and spectacular consequences.

And when you want a man to guide you through a landscape and wildlife that seems to have been left untouched since prehistoric times, you better than Mr Jurassic Park himself, Sam Neill

Despite being born in Northern Ireland, Neill moved back to New Zealand when he was seven.

He is now rightly considered as one of the country's greatest actors, and earlier this year he starred in another New Zealand-made film, Hunt for the Wilderpeople, the adventure comedy-drama written and directed by Taika Waititi.

Narrator Neill brings an extra level of gravitas to this breathtaking three-part wildlife series which transports viewers to an exotic and mysterious island chain, and reveals how the country's rich, intriguing wildlife manages to survive.

The first episode features some of New Zealand's most ancient and weirdest of species, and brings to life the story of how their spectacular home was formed. Dinosaur-like reptiles still prowled here, while insects have become giants, birds lose the power of flight and behave like badgers, and the people who settled here have also developed their own unique culture.

Across New Zealand life battles the natural forces – which shaped its past and continue to drive life there today. One of the most geologically active countries on earth, it's a beautiful but dangerous place to live, regularly rocked by earthquakes, volcanic activity and a wild and wet climate.

This episode reveals some unexpected and spectacular solutions wildlife have adopted to survive. Bustling penguin cities thrive in dwarf rainforests and strangler trees crack dry lava fields turning volcanic wasteland into an oasis full of life.

Plus, there is footage of shepherds and their sheepdogs flying across vast mountainous landscapes in helicopters, and an insight into how dolphins have developed their own leaping body language.

On these mythical islands, the astonishing creatures and resilient people have risen to the challenges of their dramatic and demanding home, and the resulting sights and sounds are truly astonishing.



New Zealand: Earth's Mythical Islands, Tuesday, BBC2, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Eden

Channel 4, 9pm

New series. Reality programme filmed over the course of a year in which 23 men and women try to build a new life and new society from scratch in a remote location in the Highlands, with participants including a doctor, a vet, a chef, a carpenter and a shepherdess. In the opening edition, they tackle the start of their 365-day experience as they open the gates into the 600 acres of land they'll be calling home for the next 12 months.

The Somme 1916 – From Both Sides of the Wire BBC2, 9pm

While some channels may be obsessed with ratings-grabbing shows, it's good to know that the Bees are always on hand to uphold Lord Reith's simple philosophy: inform, educate, entertain. And when it comes to informing and educating on one of the bloodiest conflicts of the 20th century, this new series does a good job. Peter Barton is our guide, and he will be examining events of the First World War battle from German and British perspectives. While much of the received wisdom may tell us one thing, Barton reveals a story that gives us a fresh take on those horrific events of 100 years ago when 420,000 Britons alone lost their lives.

TUESDAY

The Job Interview

Channel 4, 9pm

Blacks Vets bosses Tracey and Val from Dudley interview for a receptionist, with 24-year-old David, who has struggled to find a job and support his family, among the applicants. Others up for consideration include 41-year-old animal lover Nicola, who owns 150 quails, and 27-year-old Emily who wants a better life/work balance after quitting teaching. Also interviewing are Lee and Karen from Colossal Training, who run maritime health and safety courses, looking for a super-organised admin officer for their new branch in Liverpool.

WEDNESDAY

Boy Meets Girl

BBC2, 10pm

Leo gets a job as a dispatch driver and meets his match in his new prankster-loving boss. Meanwhile, Pam invites Peggy over for dinner now that they are 'virtually in-laws', with the catering to be provided by Tony's cafe. Anji presents James with some life-changing news, and Charlie gets thrown out of his lodgings, leading to Pam offering him Leo's room.

Man Down

Channel 4, 10pm

Even if you ignore his height, Greg Davies has done a fine job of eclipsing fellow chat show guests on series such as The Graham Norton Show and Top Gear. Whether plugging his series Taskmaster or the third run of this rib-tickling sitcom, he's proved comedy gold over the past few months. This week, Dan (Davies) meets his replacement in the classroom, Miss Clarke (Isy Suttie), and the pupils don't take his departure the way he hopes. He's also dazzled by a trendy priest (Phil Nichol), and is welcomed into the church club, where he soon makes an impression. Meanwhile, Jo (Róisín Conaty) pitches her new shop 'idea' to the town council, and 'Daddy' (Tony Robinson) continues to charm mum (Gwyneth Powell) and Nesta (Stephanie Cole).

Man Down, Wednesday, Channel 4, 10pm

THURSDAY

New Blood

BBC1, 9pm

Rash and Stefan vow to prove the innocence of Leila, who recalls that charity boss Lisa had the opportunity to tamper with the dosage that killed her accountant. Stefan discovers the victim once worked for Malik and had recently visited him – but when Malik won't talk, the pair follow Lisa to the hotel of a high-ranking African politician David Kumalah, where they find more than they expected. Meanwhile, Alison has a breakthrough while searching the charity's accounts – but will it be too little too late? Last in the series.

FRIDAY

Celebrity First Dates

Channel 4, 9pm

Four more celebrities go in search of romance with members of the public. Brad Simpson, lead singer of boy band the Vamps, meets an 18-year-old fan, while Atomic Kitten's Natasha Hamilton goes on her first date since splitting up with fellow pop star Ritchie Neville. Bernie Clifton, mainstay of 1970s and 1980s TV with his ostrich puppet, has an encounter with an 80something bellydancer, while rugby league player Keegan Hirst gets an introduction to the gay dating scene from a fitness adviser.

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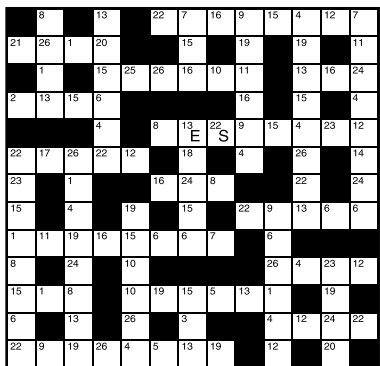
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BRAIN GYM No.386

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

J	F	K	U	I	B	X	G	A	R	Y	P	O
N	Q	M	C	Z	E	D	L	H	W	V	S	T

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

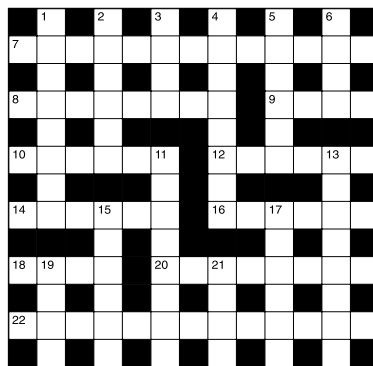
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- Far too colourless to be accepted in society? (6,3,4)
- The point of punctuation (4,4)
- Stick around a street (4)
- Soldier with papers in order (6)
- Poles strangely following a certain inclination (6)
- Dances arranged to scale (6)
- New depots he controls, absolutely (6)
- Where needles are kept, just in case! (4)
- Regarded as having taken no active part (6,2)
- I can't sing if in distress - though trivial (13)

Down

- No answers? (8)
- Appear on the scene and defy gravity? (4,2)
- An entrance I'd turn in at (4)
- The control of the stock-holder? (4-4)
- It goes round without joining up (6)
- Turn pale - being possibly guilty (4)
- Having associations for a Communist who had nothing on loan (8)
- Offer for money? (8)
- Bring out in a felicitous way (6)
- Draw South by boat (6)
- It's a sound quality (4)
- Fools break up the sofa (4)



Quick Clues:

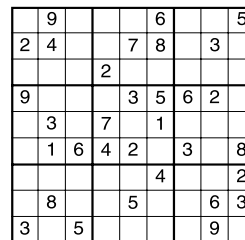
Across

- Not showy (13)
- Important (8)
- Row (4)
- Concurred (6)
- Elf (6)
- Mason's tool (6)
- Gloomy (6)
- Fairy (4)
- Speed (8)
- Scarce (2,5,6)

Down

- Imperil (8)
- Span (6)
- Stupefy (4)
- Fenced in (8)
- Sour (6)
- Remedy (4)
- Distribution (8)
- Strangle (8)
- Heaviness (6)
- Get free (6)
- Sea-eagle (4)
- Endure (4)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

3	5	4	7	9	1	2	8	6
1	6	8	4	3	2	5	7	9
7	2	9	8	3	6	4	5	1
6	1	7	2	4	5	8	9	3
4	9	2	1	6	3	6	5	7
8	3	5	6	7	9	1	4	2
9	7	6	5	2	8	3	1	4
2	6	3	9	1	4	7	6	5
5	4	1	3	6	7	9	2	8

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Stop; 8 Above board; 9 Bigger; 10 Visa; 12 Tremor; 14 Direct; 15 Feudal; 17 Queens; 18 Asti; 19 Twilight; 21 Silhouette; 22 Made. Down: 2 Take orders; 3 Pate; 4 Litter; 5 Feared; 6 Converse; 7 Idea; 11 Second-hand; 13 Midnight; 16 Let out; 17 Quills; 18 Also; 20 Item. QUICK - Across: 1 Path; 8 Outlandish; 9 Alienate; 10 Arid; 12 Barren; 14 Trench; 15 Vanish; 17 Hither; 18 Tell; 19 Narcotic; 21 Correspond; 22 Step. Down: 2 Amalgamate; 3 Hose; 4 Strain; 5 Patient; 6 Adjacent; 7 Shed; 11 Incredible; 13 Rallier; 16 Honest; 17 Harrow; 18 Tack; 20 Odds

Quiz

- Which Gestapo chief did Carlos the Jackal's lawyer Jacques Vergès also defend?
- Which Far East capital was known as Batavia until 1949?
- What do the initials QED stand for?
- Which perennial plant is also called Lady's Smock?
- Which satellite relayed the first live TV transmission between the USA and Europe?
- Of what nationality is the novelist and politician Mario Vargas Llosa?
- To which king did Parliament present the Nineteen Propositions?
- Of which metal is galena the chief ore?
- What is the capital of West Bengal state?
- Which inflammation is also called muscular rheumatism?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Feldspars or felspars; 2 Nick Berry;

3 Charles; 4 Canada; 5 China; 6 Chess;

7 Phil Babb; 8 Language and literature;

9 Jean-Philippe Rameau; 10 Rowing.

Niner: REVULSION

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

435 gives an animal,
739675 gives a cruel man,
162358 gives a robber.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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DRAWING the blinds one morning, my heart skips a beat as a figure runs from the window to the back of our lodge.

I creep towards the back bedroom, peek, and there, staring back at me, is a pair of big Bambi eyes, belonging to one of the many deer easily spotted at Bath Mill Lodge Retreat.

It's a great spot for families, made up of 63 five-star self-catering lodges, set in an Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty since 2015, just three miles away from the grand city of Bath. The modern chalets sleep between two and eight people and have a contemporary interior, from the open-plan living space through to the furnishings and fabrics. There's a fully kitted out kitchen,

By Claire Spreadbury

TV with new movies available to download and multiple bathrooms. Whatever the weather, there are plenty of fun days out for all the clan close by, from the local history of the Roman Baths (there's a kids' audio tour and worksheets to fill in – my two girls loved hearing about the 'old days' and sniffing in the smelly hot baths!) to the beautiful Cheddar Gorge and Longleat Safari Park.

There are also pretty country trails, leisurely canal walks, giant stately homes and gardens to explore. And on those days where you'd rather take it easy, there are woodland walks and cycle paths surrounding Bath Mill Lodge.

If you don't feel like cooking, there's a restaurant and bar, housed in the 350-year-old Mill House, offering great service and making an extra fuss over little ones.

* Lodges sleep up to eight people and prices start from £242 for a three-night stay (off peak) in studio accommodation sleeping two people. Visit www.darwinescapes.co.uk

THE HOTEL BREAK
Ickworth Hotel, Suffolk

I can't remember the last time I felt my blood pressure rising because of the amount of physical effort needed to ride a bike uphill. I'm climbing a hill in the trails surrounding Ickworth House and Hotel.

We arrived as four but right now, me and my other half are taking in some of the gorgeous greenery amid the 1,800 acres of National Trust grounds, on mountain bikes we've borrowed from the hotel free of charge. Our two little terrors, meanwhile, are getting creative in kids' club Four Bears Den – also free for two hours every day. Kids and adults are thought of

pretty equally here. Grown-ups can enjoy formal fine dining at Frederick's, safe in the knowledge little ones are being looked after.

Children, meanwhile, get to have 'high tea' at 5pm in the cinema room, followed by a film. Creche staff are also on hand, meaning it's relaxing for parents too.

Although grand there's a relaxed atmosphere, a delight for anyone with children. Rooms are furnished with board games, and DVDs are available to borrow any time. And for super-sized fun, head down to the games room. Ensuring time out for parents and oodles of entertainment for kids of all ages, The Ickworth has family escapes perfectly framed.

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Saturday Night Theatre from £169.⁹⁵

Catch the Theatre Express and enjoy a super two-day weekend break in the capital.

There's a selection of London hotels to choose from (supplements may apply) and rail travel is standard class with the option to upgrade. Departs Saturday from Birmingham New Street, Shrewsbury, Stafford or Wolverhampton, returning on the Sunday.

The ticket is for a Saturday evening performance.

Rail inclusive breaks – Three days

Theatre Showstopper from £239.⁹⁵

This popular theatre package to the West End departs from Birmingham New Street, Shrewsbury, Stafford or Wolverhampton on the Friday returning on Sunday.

Standard class travel is included with the option to upgrade, plus two nights stay at a four-star London hotel (supplements may apply).

Includes a top priced ticket for a Friday evening performance.

Coach inclusive breaks – Two days

Saturday Night from £149.⁹⁵

Theatre Weekend with Dinner from £159.⁹⁵

For the Theatre Weekend with Dinner option, see the matinee performance before heading to the hotel for an evening meal. The Saturday Night option includes a ticket for the evening performance (meal not included).

Both breaks include a standard priced theatre ticket and the option to upgrade plus an overnight stay in a four-star outer London hotel.



DAYS: 2 OR 3 DEPARTS: VARIOUS DATES

Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782)



Seven-bedroom home is stylish and impressive

Extremely well presented and particularly stylish, 17 High Park Crescent, Sedgley, lies in an ever popular area within walking distance of the town centre.

An impressive and substantial residence, it is for sale through Skitts at £450,000 with no chain.

It has around 2,700sq.ft of seven bedroom living accommodation, four bathrooms, three reception rooms, a 20ft breakfast kitchen, detached double garage (having potential to convert to separate living accommodation - subject to planning permission), private rear garden, off road parking and stunning panoramic views to the rear.

With gas central heating and double glazing, in more detail, it has a briquette driveway providing parking for numerous vehicles past a lawned fore-garden. Steps past a further lawn area leading to the entrance porch. The entrance hall has laminate flooring, a storage cupboard, stairs off and a W.C. The three reception rooms include a ground floor dining room, a ground floor sitting room with laminate flooring and patio doors leading to the rear. The kitchen has patio doors leading out to the rear garden.

Off the first floor landing is stairs to the second floor, a WC, a living room with a pebble effect gas fire, laminate flooring and patio doors to a Juliette balcony. Bedroom two has built-in wardrobes with mirror fronted sliding doors and an en-suite shower room with ceramic wall tiling. Bedroom five has laminate flooring and bedroom seven is also on this floor.

Off the second floor landing is the master bedroom with a walk-in wardrobe and an en-suite shower room with ceramic wall and floor tiling.

Bedroom three has built-in wardrobes with mirror fronted sliding doors and an en-suite shower room with ceramic wall and floor tiling.

Bedroom six has a built-in wardrobe with mirror fitted sliding doors. Bedroom four is also to be found on this level.

The rear garden has a gravel area, patio area, a neat lawn, two side gates and a shed.

SEDGLEY £450,000



TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Skitts

TEL: 01902 686868

EMAIL: sedgley@skitts.net

KEY FEATURES

Stylish detached

Walking distance of town centre

20ft breakfast kitchen

Double garage

Panoramic views



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Halesowen Office Lettings & Property Management



NEW

HALESOWEN, Hagley Road£950 pcm+Fees
A part built modern semi-detached house close to the Squirrels Estate, Halesowen Town Centre & buses to Birmingham This large house features 2 lovely reception rooms, fitted kitchen, private rear garden, large storage shed, 5 good size bedrooms, bathroom suite with shower, driveway for 2/3 cars (garage not included) Ideal family home. EPC: C



AMBLECOTE, High Street £775 pcm+Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a home on a select development, 'Crystal Gardens'. This home features a spacious lounge/dining area, well appointed kitchen, downstairs WC, the 1st floor has 2 bedrooms & a family bathroom & on the 2nd floor there is a master bedroom with a large en-suite, 2 allocated parking spaces, front & rear gardens. This property will not be available for long. Minimum contract 12 months. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Broadway Avenue£725 pcm+Fees
Modern 3 bedroom semi-detached house centrally located within minutes of Halesowen Town Centre and features entrance hallway, lovely fitted kitchen, large living room, 3 double bedrooms, bathroom suite with separate shower, driveway parking. Not to be missed! EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Wassell Road£725 pcm+Fees
A large unfurnished semi-detached house in central Halesowen which features: entrance porch, lounge, fully fitted kitchen, covered side entrance, private rear garden, 3 good size bedrooms, large bathroom with shower over bath, garage & driveway. Also benefiting from gas central heating and double glazing. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Middlefield Avenue£650 pcm+Fees
Located in Hurst Green this unfurnished semi detached house comprising of 26ft through lounge/dining room, a fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms and a further single. Benefits from a garage and driveway with low maintenance gardens. Very popular area. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: TBC



CRADLEY HEATH, Surfeit Hill Road£645 pcm+Fees
A fully refurbished semi-detached home, briefly comprising of: Large lounge/diner with access to the garden, modern fitted kitchen, shower room, 3 bedrooms, double glazing, gas central heating, driveway & garage parking, rear garden. EPC: C



NEW

HALESOWEN, Beaumont Road£575 pcm+Fees
Ideally located in Blackheath for local amenities, train station close by and the M5. This large 2 double bedroom and terrace house features 2 reception rooms with 1 reception having side flooring and a working wood burner, fitted kitchen, utility room with washing machine, 2 double bedrooms, upstairs bathroom, court yard rear garden, on road parking and off road parking Available for 1 car plus garage (accessed from Clifton Road). EPC: TBC



NEW

WORDSLEY, Wordsley Court£575 pcm+Fees
1st floor fully refurbished large apartment within walking distance of Wordsley Green & King George V park. Featuring lovely lounge, 2 generous size double bedrooms, fitted kitchen, shower room, secure parking to rear of property. EPC: C



NEW

HALESOWEN, Cavalier Drive£550 pcm+Fees
This beautifully presented and well looked after 1st floor apartment is centrally located to Halesowen, within easy reach of the town centre and local bus station. Featuring 2 bedrooms, large lounge with access to your own balcony, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, electric heating, double glazing, and allocated parking for one car. A must see property. EPC: D



NEW

CRADLEY HEATH, Trejon Road£525 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished detached house within minutes of Old Hill Train Station, Haden Hill Leisure Centre and close to Timberlea Primary School. Featuring brand new gas central heating, 2 reception rooms, small fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, bathroom, front and rear gardens, driveway for 1 car. EPC: TBC



CRADLEY HEATH, Silverthorne Lane£525 pcm+Fees
A really well presented modern style 2 bedroom house close to Cradley Heath Train Station and bus links. Lounge with fireplace, large fitted kitchen with new oven/hob, patio doors to rear garden, upstairs bathroom with shower, gas central heating, driveway parking. Minimum 12 month contract. EPC: C



KIDDERMINSTER, Patin House£515 pcm+Fees
A 1 bedroom ground floor apartment set in a converted Victorian house comprising of: porch, lounge, fitted kitchen with appliances and granite work tops, double bedroom, fully tiled bathroom with shower, study, gas central heating (under floor heating to kitchen & bathroom) double glazing, communal gardens and allocated parking. Available Now! EPC: TBC



NEW

OLDSWINFORD, Heath Lane£495 pcm+Fees
Ideally located in the centre of Oldswinford for shops, transport links and Mary Stevens Park. This large and spacious end terrace house features 3 good size bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, downstairs bathroom, upstairs toilet, fitted kitchen, enclosed rear garden and on road parking. EPC: E



NETHERTON, Halesowen Road£495 pcm+Fees
A distinctive unfurnished detached nailer's cottage style home, briefly comprising of: 2 cosy reception rooms with feature Arga, 2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen with white goods, original Laura Ashley downstairs bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, garage and driveway parking, front and rear gardens. EPC: E



CRADLEY HEATH, Seedhouse Court£495 pcm+Fees
Set within lovely private gardens. Ideally located for Old Hill train station, local shops and buses for Cradley Heath, Halesowen and Merry Hill, an unfurnished ground floor apartment features 2 double bedrooms, fitted kitchen with white goods, spacious lounge, house bathroom with shower, allocated parking. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Walton Court£450 pcm+Fees
A spacious 1st floor flat surrounded by maintained communal gardens in a popular location. Comprises entrance hall with storage cupboard, double bedroom, fitted kitchen with marble effect work surface, separate utility room, light and airy lounge, bathroom with shower over bath and shed. Available End of August/September. Garage not included. EPC: TBC



CRADLEY HEATH, King Street£440 pcm+Fees
Located in the heart of Old Hill. Ideally situated for local train links, buses and train links is this unfurnished 1st floor modern apartment which comprises of 1 double bedroom, fitted kitchen with a small fridge, spacious lounge, double glazing, electric storage heating, bathroom with shower, allocated parking space. EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH, Elbow Street£425 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished ground floor apartment on a popular development, close to Old Hill High Street and the local train station. The property features: living room, fitted kitchen, 1 double bedroom, bathroom with shower. Benefits include electric storage heating, allocated parking space. EPC: D



CRADLEY HEATH, Elbow Street£425 pcm+Fees
Unfurnished 2nd floor flat in a popular area which is ideal for shops, buses and Old Hill Train Station. Featuring 1 double bedroom, electric storage heating, spacious living room, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, communal garden, allocated parking. EPC: TBC



STOURBRIDGE, Bagley Street£425 pcm+Fees
COMING SOON! 4 fully refurbished apartments (2 - ground floor & 2 - 1st floor) within a stones throw of Stourbridge town centre. The apartments feature an open plan lounge/ fitted kitchen, shower room, 1 double bedroom & private rear parking. Not to be missed! EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Cobham Road£425 pcm+Fees
COMING SOON! 4 fully refurbished apartments (2 - ground floor & 2 - 1st floor) within a stones throw of Stourbridge town centre. The apartments feature an open plan lounge/ fitted kitchen, shower room, 1 double bedroom & private rear parking. Not to be missed! EPC: TBC

PROPERTY



Charming mid-terrace cottage from around 1900

This charming mid-terrace cottage is thought to date from circa 1900 having been converted from a barn which originally occupied the site in this sought after area of Low Habberley.

The property, which lies between Kidderminster and Bewdley, is close to open countryside and the Habberley Valley Nature Reserve.

It is on the market for £199,950.

LOW HABBERLEY

£199,950

Highlights in brief include a 20ft lounge/dining room, attractive fitted kitchen with integral appliances, master bedroom with walk-in wardrobe, stylish re-fitted bathroom, spacious second floor bedroom, secluded patio gardens to rear

and driveway parking. The present owner has greatly improved the property which is impeccably well presented throughout featuring LPG fired central heating and white wood-effect uPVC double glazing including a replica sash window.

Contact Allan Morris on 01562 747755 or visit www.allan-morris.co.uk

Immaculate property has been refurbished

SMETHWICK

£289,950

>>>

An immaculate link-detached property in Bowling Green Drive, Smethwick, has been refurbished throughout, with great attention to detail taken.

It is for sale through Connells at £289,950.

With a converted garage it has an entrance hall, a guest WC, a lounge with a gas fire and French doors, a kitchen/ diner with an integrated electric oven and gas hob with cooker hood over, bedroom one with built-in wardrobes and an en-suite shower room, two further bedrooms (both also having built-in wardrobes), a bathroom and a rear garden.

Contact Connells on 0121 4203611 or visit the website www.connells.co.uk



Halesowen



Olive Hill Road

- * Extended semi-detached house
- * Situated in popular tree line road
- * Good sized living room
- * Kitchen/dining room
- * Three bedrooms
- * Lovely rear garden
- * Rear Garage EPC=tb

Offers in the region of £210,000

Rowley Regis



Yew Tree Lane

- * Well proportioned detached house
- * Kitchen/breakfast room
- * Three reception rooms
- * Utility and downstairs shower room
- * Three good sized bedrooms
- * Re-fitted shower room
- * Garage * Beautiful rear garden EPC=tb

Offers in the region of £209,950

Stourbridge



Plot 1 Yardley Street

- * Brand New Detached House * Principal Bedroom with Ensuite, Two Further Bedrooms
- * Well Appointed Bathroom, Ensuite & Fitted Cloakroom * Quality Fitted Kitchen with Host of Appliances/Dining Room * Lounge Opening to Good-Sized Gardens * Completion Anticipated July/August EPC=B

£207,500

Oldbury



Apsley Road

- * Spacious extended semi-detached house
- * Extended living room * Dining room
- * Extended kitchen/breakfast room
- * Two bedrooms (potential to create third bedroom) * Re-fitted shower room
- * Garage
- * Good size rear garden EPC=C

Offers in the region of £199,950

Halesowen



Greenhill Road

- * Traditional style semi detached house
- * Through lounge
- * Kitchen
- * Three bedrooms
- * Bathroom with shower cubicle
- * Side store
- * Delightful rear garden EPC=E

Offers in the region of £224,950

Romsley



Dark Lane

- * Impressive Detached Bungalow
- * Outstanding views of neighbouring districts
- * Principal Bedroom with Ensuite
- * Two Further Bedrooms & Shower Room
- * Lounge, Separate Dining Room
- * Fitted Kitchen, Utility Room, Sun Lounge
- * Double Garage, Landscaped Gardens EPC=E

Offers in the region of £450,000

Rowley Regis



Payne Street

- * A tastefully presented terraced house
- * Two reception rooms
- * Kitchen with utility area
- * Two bedrooms * First floor bathroom
- * Good sized rear garden
- * Conveniently situated for Blackheath Town Centre EPC=E

Offers in the region of £105,000

Quinton



Glyn Farm Road

- * Traditional style semi detached house
- * Tastefully presented accommodation
- * Two reception rooms * Quality fitted kitchen
- * Three bedrooms * Well appointed bathroom with both bath and shower
- * Exceptionally good sized gardens
- * Off road parking and car port EPC=E

Offers in the region of £199,995

Oldbury



Chestnut Road

- * Extended much improved semi detached house * Two reception rooms
- * Extended re-fitted kitchen
- * Three bedrooms
- * Re-fitted bathroom and additional wc
- * Small garage * Pleasant rear garden
- * No upward chain EPC=D

Offers in the region of £224,950

Halesowen



Carters Lane

- * Well Maintained Semi Detached House
- * Situated on Service Road
- * Three Bedrooms * Two Reception Rooms
- * Good Sized Kitchen
- * Popular Residential Location
- * Attractive Rear Garden
- * No upward chain EPC=D

Offers in the region of £209,950

Halesowen



Highlands Road

- * Semi detached house with potential
- * Prominent corner position
- * Detached garage with driveway
- * Three bedrooms
- * Through lounge
- * Lovely views
- EPC=D

Offers in the region of £239,950

Halesowen



King Charles Road

- * Spacious traditional style semi-detached house
- * Two reception rooms * Three bedrooms
- * Garage * Good-sized garden
- * Sought after location
- * Full of potential
- * No upward chain EPC=E

Offers in the region of £259,950

Halesowen



Spies Lane

- * Second floor flat
- * Living room
- * Two bedrooms
- * Communal parking
- * Communal gardens
- EPC=C

Offers in excess of £110,000

Hagley



Station Road

- * An Impressive Edwardian Semi-Detached House * 4 Reception Rooms, Fitted Kitchen/ Dining Room, Large Family Room, Spacious Utility/Hobbies Room * Principal Bedroom with Ensuite Bathroom & Dressing Areas * 3 Further Bedrooms * Extensive Landscaped South Facing Gardens EPC=D

Offers in the region of £599,995

Halesowen



Hagley Road West

- * Deceptively Spacious Detached family home
- * Four good sized bedrooms
- * Large lounge/dining room
- * Breakfast room leading onto kitchen
- * Tandem garage
- * Beautiful rear garden with southerly aspect EPC=F

Offers in the region of £349,950

Oldbury



Oak Road

- * Dining room
- * Living room
- * Former garage/family room
- * Kitchen and utility
- * Bedroom two with en-suite
- * Four further bedrooms
- * Family bathroom EPC=D

Offers in the region of £325,000

Halesowen



Middlefield Avenue

- * Link detached house
- * Lounge* Dining room
- * Conservatory* Breakfast room
- * Three bedrooms* Bathroom
- * Garage
- EPC=D

Offers in the region of £239,950

Halesowen



Priory Road

- * Extended semi-detached house
- * Three reception rooms
- * Kitchen/breakfast room
- * Four bedrooms
- * Bathroom
- * Pleasant rear garden
- EPC=E

Offers in the region of £279,950

Halesowen Hurst Green



Fairfield Road

- * Detached bungalow
- * Block paved driveway
- * Open plan kitchen/living room
- * Utility
- * Two bedrooms
- * Shower room
- EPC=D

Offers in the region of £159,950

Halesowen



Kent Road

- * Ground floor flat
- * Kitchen/breakfast room
- * Living room
- * Two bedrooms
- * Shower room
- * Private garden
- EPC=C

£110,000

Dudley



Swan Street

- * Large end terrace house
- * Downstairs wc
- * Re-fitted kitchen/breakfast room
- * Lounge and dining room
- * Three bedrooms
- * Bathroom
- * Additional plot of land EPC=D

Offers in the region of £125,000

Halesowen



Chantry Drive

- * Detached bungalow
- * Two bedrooms
- * Conservatory
- * Garage
- * NO UPWARD CHAIN
- EPC=E

Offers in the region of £205,000

Rowley Regis



Halesowen Street

- * Ideal for first time buyers or those down sizing
- * Semi detached house
- * Two bedrooms
- * Re-fitted shower room and breakfast kitchen
- * Conservatory
- EPC=D

Offers in the region of £134,950

Halesowen



Carters Lane

- * Detached family house extended at rear
- * Scope for some upgrading and re-planning
- * Kitchen (utility, shower room, and store formed out of garage)
- * Three reception rooms
- * Three bedrooms * Bathroom with separate wc
- * Pleasant gardens EPC=E

Offers in the region of £275,000

Birmingham Kings Heath



Denford Grove

- * Traditional semi-detached house
- * Two reception rooms
- * Three bedrooms * Bathroom * Garage
- * Popular cul-de-sac location
- * In need of some general modernisation and improvement
- EPC=E

Offers in the region of £189,950

Halesowen



Vicarage Road

- * Terraced house
- * Kitchen and lobby
- * Ground floor bathroom
- * Three bedrooms
- * Rear Garden
- EPC=D

Offers in the region of £110,000

Halesowen



Narrow Lane

- * Spacious Detached house
- * Three reception rooms
- * Study* Downstairs wc and utility
- * Five bedrooms one with en-suite
- * Bathroom
- * Pleasant garden and garage.
- EPC=E

Offers in the region of £304,950

Birmingham



Parkside

- * Semi-detached house
- * Three bedrooms
- * Kitchen/breakfast room
- * Shower room
- * Rear garden
- * Garage
- EPC=C

Offers in the region of £121,250

Brierley Hill



Victoria Road

- * End Terraced House * Three storey
- * Lounge * Fitted cloakroom
- * Three bedrooms * En-suite
- * Garage * Enclosed gardens
- * Gas boiler heating radiators
- * Double glazed windows
- EPC=C

Offers in the region of £130,000

Rowley Regis



High Street

- * To Let
- * Prominent Location
- * Lock-up Shop
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- EPC=C

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JANE, very attractive blonde, own house in lovely village, car etc, loves travel to sunny places, entertaining, exercise WLTm male with similar interests. Text only Mailbox: 5430085

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673

ATTRACTIVE energetic mature lady, looking for well-travelled, solvent companion for holidays, dining out and days away. Text only Mailbox: 5502846

KIM, 32yrs, attractive blonde lady seeks discreet gent for daytime distractions. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3007 Box 421657

BROWN eyed brummie female 65 smoker likes music, cinema, theatre, meals out, WLTm male 66 - 73 for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 5501142

JANE, young 40yrs, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715

MATURE female 63 seeks assertive younger man 30-50 for adult fun. Must be discreet. Text only Mailbox: 5495834

KERRY, 35yrs, married in open relationship, attractive, tall, slim and very presentable. Seeks discreet gent any age for casual pleasurable encounters. Tel: 0906 515 3043 Box 422363

SINGLE tall blonde, 30yrs, bored of life's mundane routines looking for someone discreet fun with likeminded man, any age/looks. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423089

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399

CAROL, 44, brunette with plenty of spare time on her hands seeks special mature male for fun times together. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423057

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3023 Box 421375

SARAH 39, blonde hair, blue/green eyes, fun loving and romantic looking for new possibilities with well built, dark haired tactile male. Age unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423093

WENDY, mature, passionate ladylike divorcee seeks no strings casual friendship/fun with gent any age. Tel: 0906 515 3035 Box 421605

ALISON 28, feminine, outgoing, adventurous brunette who knows what she wants, seeks fit, fun loving man to sweep her off her feet. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423061

JESS, pretty blonde lady. 29yrs, feminine and caring. Loves older mature men who are worldly wise. Looks unimportant must have GSOH. Text Only Box: 400063

SABINA, 35, outgoing attractive brunette, fit and carefree just looking for fun times without complications, maybe more later. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423003

KATRIANA, professional sincere lady, 48yrs, loves to have a good time. Very sensual and loves men of all ages. Please text me for a chat. Text Only Box 4148978

EILEEN, 49, lovely brunette, adventurous and eager to please seeks intelligent male to share the fun side of life together. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423007

YOUNG, big boobed, single mum. Looking for a fun guy, but wants to be spoiled. Relationship ideally but happy with no strings fun. Text only Mailbox: 5496828

ATTRACTIVE slim 54yr old female looking for caring genuine male 50-58 yrs to wine and dine with, share nice times with, please get in touch. Text only Mailbox: 5359595

TINA, 41, WLTm Muslim men, Indian Pakistani Kurdish or Turkish for daytime or evening fun, can accommodate, can travel, very discreet. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422927

JACKIE, 49, dark hair, green eyes, cuddly build, likes going out, gym, reading, looking for an honest gentleman for friendship/possible relationship. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422257

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GUY WLTm attractive smart lady, likes a dance or 2 and enjoys days out. Text only Mailbox: 4823044

MALE 57, tall, seeks mature female, 50-75, for close adult fun, any size or status. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422409

MALE, 50s, tall, attractive, seeks mature female, 40-70, for mutual spanking. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422429

ALAN, 49, genuine, builder, 6ft, six pack, GSOH, likes a laugh, lives in Coventry, wishes to meet a woman of any age for relationship. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422755

VERY broadminded male, looking for some adult fun with a hot sexy female, any age, preferably broadminded too. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422823

SEMI retired business man, early 60s, well travelled, fit, tanned, good looking, solvent, very discreet. WLTm a female, 35-55, married or single, for winning, dining daytime fun. West Midlands or Staffs. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422805

JOE, semi retired, young looking and acting, slim and fit, 5ft8, considered good company, looking for daytime meets. Let's see if we click. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422803

TALL, attractive, Shrewsbury male, 57, WLTm an attractive female, any age/status, for discreet daytime fun and excitement. ACA. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422801

MIKE, 50, tall, brown hair, happy go lucky and ready for anything, seeking a soul mate for good times ahead, West Midlands. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422799

MALE, 5ft9, medium build, likes sports, WLTm a lady for daytime fun. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422747

SINGLE male 50 medium build looking for someone to show me the ropes age between 60 - 85, bit only. Text only Mailbox: 5423010

42 yr old man seeking buxom, voluptuous, 50+ lady for naughty NSA fun. Colour, race etc unimportant. Text only Mailbox: 5480459

RETIRED stonemason, dark hair, 5ft10, likes meals out, pubs, hotels, WLTm a young lady, status unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422931

JOHN, WLTm a young lady, 18-23, for fun, go to hotels etc. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422671

Gay Singles

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BI-CURIOS male 57 looking for 40-56 yrs old bi-curious male for discreet fun. Text only 4816135

ANNIE, cross dresser transvestite, seeking another cross dresser transvestite for discreet fun and relationship, in the Shropshire area. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423075

YOUNG looking gay male looking for clean shaving male 40s 50s for friendship, maybe more. Text only Mailbox: 5492406

MATURE male WLTm similar mature hairy male, Derbyshire/Staffordshire area for friendship. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422191

BI male, Leicester area, seeks males 55-70, for fun times, no strings. ACA. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422825

MALE, 56, seeks older lady, 70-80, for close adult fun, married welcome. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 421475

Just Friends

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GAY feminine female, blue eyes, GSOH, WLTm caring fem female for friendship or LTR. No children. Text only Mailbox: 5448522

PAT 67, attractive, likes reading, holidays, seeking female, 65-72 for friendship. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 405985

MANDY 44, fun flirty blonde, petite size 6-8, gorgeous green eyes seeks special male for friendship and uncomplicated love. Age unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422863

FEMALE, 33, blue eyes, long blonde hair, pretty, slim, looking for Asian man to have some discreet no strings fun with. Text only Mailbox: 5495296

GILL 61, slim dark eyed blonde seeks tall carefree male who is looking for someone special for fun times with no complications. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422843

CLILA, 40, tall blue eyed size 12 brunette, loves horses, country/beach walks, cosy nights infront of fire, good wine/food, WLTm similar male who appreciates my interests. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422009

SINGLE 40s, seeks Indian Pakistani Kurdish males, for no strings, day or evening fun, I am discreet, I can travel and I can accommodate. Midlands/Stoke on Trent. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422921

ANNE, 40, pretty professional fun female with great curves, looking for fun and romance with down to earth male looking for similar. Any age/status. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422711

FEMALE 38, large breasted, seeks Indian/Pakistani/Kurdish male for daytime fun. Can Travel/Accom. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417233

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ALISON, lonely shy blue eyed blonde, 46, just wanting to be loved, looking for caring man to pamper in return for mutual TLC. ACA. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422859

BARBARA, 44, friendly and outgoing but lonely, seeking similar lonely male to pamper, enjoy fun times and affection with. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422839

MAUREEN, 38, pretty brunette, new to the area and very lonely, looking to meet someone understanding for convenient friendship, 30-60yrs. Can travel. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422815

TINA, 43, young looking attractive single female looking for love, with similar long hair resorting to advertising in the hope of finding love. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 421613

JACKIE 40, slim brunette, with sultry green eyes seeks tall guy with nice eyes who understands women, for some really good times. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422819

SARAH, brown hair, dark eyes, likes crafts, cooking, cinema, socialising, looking for a male friend, 30-35, possibly leading to relationship. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422589

SARA 34yr old single mum looking for a genuine male to make me laugh again and help put the spark back into my life. Looks unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422541

JOANNE, 48, curvy black female, likes cooking, cinema, socialising, seeking friendship leading to LTR, must be honest, romantic, caring and loyal and have a GSOH. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422633

JO 45, hardworking nurse with crazy sense of humour, looking for fun male with plenty of ideas to spice up her spare time. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422545

SARA 34yr old single mum looking for a genuine male to make me laugh again and help put the spark back into my life. Looks unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422541

AFRICAN lady, 45 yrs, 5ft 8, slim, sensual, creative, interesting, looking for NSA fun with a man of means. Must be non-smoker. Text only Mailbox: 5475056

RITA 41, exotic olive skinned female, friendly, chatty, loves to entertain, seeks loving honest male to pamper and make happy. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422723

PETRIANA, 44, very attractive, voluptuous blonde, with old-fashioned values, seeks romantic down to earth male for a special relationship. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422717

PASSIONATE, broadminded curvy lady 67 seeks very assertive discreet younger male 25-45 for no strings fun, looks unimportant. Text only Mailbox: 5480845

JULIE, petite, slim, attractive blonde looking early 40's, enjoys wining, dining, theatre seeking good looking romantic male, 45-55, for mutual spoiling. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422709

LADY, 48, 5ft2, hazel eyes, brown hair, likes bowling, meals out, nights in, ice skating, looking for a toy boy, 30-42, who is fun and enjoys life to have a good time with. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422679

BARBARA, is a caring lady who seeks a man to care for, she will do anything to make you happy. Just give her a call today. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422411

50YRS, old attractive lady. Sheila, caring honest, seeks discreet gent. ACA. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422469

LOVELY lady, inside and out, very caring, loving nature, likes music, days out, countryside, poetry, long walks, meals in and out, looking for a gentleman, 65-80. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422525

CARING, honest female, WLTm genuine gentleman for LTR in the West Midlands area. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422111

NICOLA 32yr old slim sexy single mum looking for fun times maybe more with similar open-minded uncomplicated companion. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422487

LUCY 37yrs 5ft 11ins brunette, loves nightlife, socialising, having fun, looking for fun guy who can make me laugh and promises a good time. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422455

EMMA 56, active and always on the go, seeks fit, active, country loving guy who shares passion for the outdoors. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422443

BARBARA, 49, attractive green-eyed blonde, OHAC, likes travel, cinema, meals out etc, looking for genuine caring male up to 65yr for possible LTR. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422439

FEMALE, 67, young looking widow, 5ft2, green eyes, likes meals out, holidays, reading, WLTm gentleman of similar age, or older. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422393

KATHY, 45, curvy blonde seeking reliable honest man who can get me out of this rut I am stuck in, open minded and looking for a genuine special? Give me a try. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422263

KAREN 32 a hardworking petite blonde enjoys nights out, music, etc. WLTm for more than just friendship with similar chilled, kind, easygoing guy. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422267

FEMALE, looking for an honest, caring, easygoing male. I am divorced and like walks, going for meals, cinema and love dogs. Text only Mailbox: 4539974

JOANNA, 49 years old, looking to meet a man for friendship 50/60 years old. Text only Mailbox: 5428223

LORRRAINE bored 36yr old looking for discreet no strings fun with likeminded uncomplicated male, any age/looks/status. Call me Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422241

SARA, 39, home owner, likes animals, tattoos and texting, looking for friendship hopefully leading to more. Get in touch! Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 421455

LORNA 28, sensual blue-eyed blonde with a beautiful smile, seeking intelligent guy in good shape for new experiences and fun loving. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422223

CHRISTINE, 48, petite blue eyed brunette, attractive, many varied interests, looking for honest, caring, N/S romantic guy with GSOH to make my life complete again. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422245

MARILYN blue eyed curvy just right female, 36, loves music, good wine, romantic strolls, cosy nights in, WLTm like-minded romantic for quality times. Age unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422227

BROWN eyed brummie female, 65, smoker, likes music, cinema, meals out, WLTm male, 66-73, for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 4400186

CLARA, 32yr old nurse who likes cosy nights in with a good bottle of wine and spending quality times with great company, if you feel the same pls get in touch. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422055

JENNY, 48, single independent attractive lady, tall and leggy, sensual and looking for very special male friend. Only genuine callers pls. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422033

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SHAUN, short black hair, mixed race, 5ft7, average build, looking for a lady, looks not important but a great personality is a must! Stanley area. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423107

JIMBO, friendly fun loving chap, 42yrs, own building company. Divorced, no kids. Wants a kind caring lady to spoil, any age, single mums welcome. Text Only Box: 4036422

IAN, 5ft8, medium build, och, late 50s, likes most things, holidays, gardening, motorbikes, with similar aged lady, 50-60, with nice personality. Tel: 0906 515 3040 Box 421345

MATURE male seeking fun times. Coventry area. Text only Mailbox: 4830151

EDDIE, young looking 54, painter and decorator by trade, likes going out and having a good time, sport and all kinds of music, looking for a LTR with a caring, honest, trustworthy person, as I am. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423113

47 year old guy, seeks female, 30-42, in the Leamington Spa/Rugby area, for LTR. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423105

IRISH widower, 65, 5ft9, GSOH, WLTm a lady for friendship in the North Birmingham area. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423071

IRISH male, 60s, 5ft9, independent, n/s, wishes to meet a lady in the Birmingham area. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420859

DAVE, 54, 5ft10, medium build, easy going, happy, looking for an attractive, loving and caring female, 45-65, for friendship and relationship. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423073

MIKE 49, slim, young looks, seeks female, 35-50 for friendship and going out. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 356651

KENT 48, youthful looking, likes countryside, keep fit, karaoke, seeks soul mate for fun times. N Shropshire. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 408411

TALL male 56, seeks close adult fun with open-minded woman, 40 to 75, any status or size. Text only Mailbox: 5410860

52 yr old male, average build, fit, lonely, seeks a lady for fun times, LTR, soul mate, or discreet dates, can travel. Text only Mailbox: 5418572

YFR old male WLTm local lady for no strings fun and meals. Honest, kind, gentlemanly, can't accommodate. Coventry. Text only Mailbox: 5498485

CARING male, 45, kind, loving, animal lover, seeks female with similar qualities. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394149

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5 Business & Farming

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8 Motoring

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£500.
07836 339569.

FORD FOCUS new shape 55 reg 72,000 Miles, electric windows, air con, long MoT, central locking, pas, 5 door. £995 ono 07754 557861

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FORD MONDEO Zetec Tdi, 03, MoT, 105,000 miles, excellent car, £550. 01902 336953.

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VW PASSAT 1.9 TDI, 02 plate, 12 months MoT, EW, AC, 0407, 413444, 0121 531 8316.

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public & legal notices

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There is also the chance to travel further afield and discover a wide variety of once-in-a-lifetime destinations including places such as America and Canada, India, Japan, or New Zealand.

New for 2016, Riviera has introduced Australia to their portfolio. Here, there are plenty of things to see and do including the chance to visit Ayers Rock, spend time in Melbourne, Sydney and Cairns, and enjoy a catamaran cruise to the Great Barrier Reef.

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)

Spectacular package in new Superb Skoda estate

By John Griffiths

Skoda's new Superb Estate is a big car – and it needs to be just to carry off its impressive array of awards just a few months after its launch.

With prices from under £20,000 its combination of comfort, low running costs and sheer space set the standard in its class, and indeed leave manufacturers of cars at twice the price somewhat red-faced.

It isn't only the critics and fleet managers who are impressed by the Superb: while overall sales are still overshadowed by the enduringly popular Fabia and Octavia, the Skoda flagship's figures are up by a staggering 80 per cent.

Space is the Superb's forte. The rear seats easily accommodate three adults and with an impressive 157mm of rear leg room there's little to compare outside the world of stretched limos.

Then there's the estate's 595 litres of cargo space – stretching to 1,950 litres with the rear seats folded.

While it sits on the same platform as the Superb hatch, the estate is actually 47mm wider, too, for even more shoulder room.

The wheelbase is stretched by 80mm, so that the estate – which shares the same sculpted lines as the hatchback – looks long, low and purposeful, with minimal overhangs. It helps to make best use of interior space and improves the larger car's handling characteristics. The styling works so well it almost belies the sheer practicality of this serious load-lugger.

The test car rejoiced in the rather unwieldy name of SEL Executive Greenline trim, which basically means that at £26,715 it comes with a high specification but its accent is nevertheless firmly on fuel and tax efficiency.

Powered by a 1.6 litre, 120PS turbo diesel it claims an average economy figure of 76.4mpg and a tax-busting 95g/km of CO2 emissions – so no VED and low benefit-in-kind rating.

That figure is, for a car of this size, pretty staggering: around 60mpg is probably a little more realistic in real-world driving, but it's still impressive.

Its 0 to 62mph time is 11.1 seconds but that may be a little misleading: after all, who buys a big estate to take part in the traffic lights grand prix.

What is more important is that the 250Nm of torque from just 1,600rpm, provides plenty of pulling power from low speeds, flexibility through the gears and flowing, relaxed progress,

Options

Driving is effortless, and the estate never feels its true size as you thread your way along winding rural roads.

There are other engine options, of course, including turbocharged petrol units producing from 125 to a whopping 280PS (the latter reserved for the all-wheel drive Superb variant).

There also 2.0 litre diesel options, with power outputs from 150 to 190PS. Some of those offer more rapid acceleration, but none match the 1.6TDi Greenline's economy figures, zero road tax and lowest (19 per cent) company car tax, which may make it the top choice for fleets.

The test car's equipment list is a long one, with 17-inch alloys, seven airbags, dual zone climate control, electric windows and door mirrors, and electrically powered tailgate, rear parking sensors, headlamp washers and an eight-inch colour touchscreen for the satnav, audio and connectivity systems.

It also comes with adaptive cruise control, a radar-based system which helps to keep you a safe distance from the car in front: when traffic slows, so do you, and when it moves freely again you accelerate to your chosen setting.

If you're not using it, for example around town, there's a front assist system with emergency braking to prevent rear-end shunts.

There is also a full range of electronic safety systems, from stability and traction programmes to hill hold assist and cornering brake control.

The top specification, most powerful and four wheel drive Superb Estate costs almost £36,000 which may sound expensive but in comparative terms it still has the competition beaten.

But at entry level, for £19,840 (£800 more than the equivalent hatchback) the estate's combination of space, comfort and practicality offer great value for money: you could pay more for a modest family hatchback. The Greenline costs more but promises considerably reduced running costs in tax and fuel.

Given its qualities it comes as no surprise that the car has already won numerous best estate and car of the year titles. It even has the canine vote – specially adapted versions are now being used as police dog carriers.



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Vauxhall

2014/14	Ampera Electron Cvt Red, 18044 miles	£15,995
2013/13	Astra Energy 1.4 5dr, Red, 15892 miles	£7,995
2013/13	Astra 5Dr HAT 1.7CDTi Exclusiv 110 Technical Grey, 39109 miles	£8,995
2013/13	Astra Se Cdti S/S S/T Silver Lightning, 8190 miles	£10,799
2013/13	Astra Sri Cdti S/S Grey, 18791 miles	£9,799
2013/13	Adam HAT 1.2 70ps Glam GRP Greenspo, 25000 miles	£7,495
2012/61	Antara 5Dr 2.4 Exclusiv Black, 38703 miles	£7,995
2009/09	Agila Club Auto Blue, 37207 miles	£4,991
2015/15	Combo 2300 L1H1 Cdti Ss E Star Silver, 1073 miles	£11,400
2013/13	Corsa Vxr 3dr Blue, 18500 miles	£10,495
2013/63	Corsa 3Dr HAT 1.6T 205ps VXR Olympic, 33000 miles	£9,995
2015/15	Corsa 1.2 Excite A/C 5dr, Royal Blue, 12000 miles	£9,491
2012/62	Corsa 1.2 Exclusive 5dr a/c, Silver Lightning, 35000 miles	£5,995
2012/62	Corsa Active Ac, White, 18423 miles	£5,995
2012/62	Corsa Active Ac 5dr, Grey, 23207 miles	£5,999
2009/09	Corsa Active Plus Ef Cdti 5dr 1.2, Silver, 8470 miles	£4,995
2008/08	Corsa Club A/C 3dr 1.2 Silver, 67653 miles	£3,495
2008/08	Corsa Club A/C Auto 5dr, Silver, 21610 miles	£4,999
2013/63	Corsa Energy Ac 3dr Red 5839 miles	£6,291
2011/11	Corsa Excite Ac 3dr 1.2 Black 41000 miles	£5,295
2013/13	Corsa Exclusiv Ac 1.2 5dr Grey 42860 miles	£5,999
2013/62	Corsa S Ac 3dr 1.2 Silver 28948 miles	£5,999
2013/13	Corsa Se Orange 3697 miles	£8,499
2015/15	Corsa Se 5dr 1.2 Green 9058 miles	£8,995
2013/13	Corsa Se Auto 1.4 5dr Red 21377 miles	£7,791
2015/15	Corsa Se Ecoflex 1.4 5dr Silver 16033 miles	£8,995
2015/15	Corsa Se Ecoflex 5dr 1.4 Red 16062 miles	£8,995
2015/65	Corsa Sri Cdti Ecoflex S/ 5dr Black 5465 miles	£11,495
2015/15	Corsa Sri Vx-Line S/S 3dr 1.4 Black 1077 miles	£10,995
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2013/13	Insignia Elite Nav Cdti Silver Lightning 6427 miles	£13,399
2013/13	Insignia Elite Nav Cdti 5dr White 33405 miles	£12,199
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2013/13	Meriva Exclusive 5dr Grey 20247 miles	£7,495
2015/15	Mokka Exclusiv Cdti Ecofi Grey 11744 miles	£13,995
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2010/10	Chevrolet Matiz Se 5dr Blue 46655 miles	£2,999
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2014/63	Chevrolet Trax Ls Grey 24600 miles	£9,495
2013/63	Chevrolet Spark LS 1.0 5dr Urban Titanium Grey 32145 miles	£4,495
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2007/07	Honda Fr-V Es I-Vtec Black 81200 miles	£5,999
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2009/59	HONDA CIVIC ES I-CTDI Silver 51895 miles	£5,995
2014/64	Kia Picanto 2 Pink 5960 miles	£7,495
2015/15	Nissan Juke VisiaBlue 18007 miles	£9,995
2012/61	Nissan Micra Visia Cvt Grey 22461 miles	£5,495
2014/64	Renault Clio D-Que M-Nav Energy T Black 10000 miles	£10,999
2014/14	Skoda Yeti Outdoor L&K Tdi Cr 4 Black 12496 miles	£17,999
2013/13	Skoda Yeti S TDi CR 4x4 5dr White 9000 miles	£11,995
2013/13	Skoda Yeti Se Plus Tsi S-A Grey 18751 miles	£12,995
2013/62	Toyota Yaris Tr Vvt-I 3dr Silver 25444 miles	£7,295
2008/08	Toyota Yaris SR D4-D Silver 32653 miles	£5,295
2014/14	Volkswagen Polo Match Edition 5dr Silver 32347 miles	£8,495

Halesowen Motor House

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www.halesowenmotorhouse.co.uk

Added kudos for XC90

By Matt Joy

Volvo's XC90 has been around for a little over a year, but in that time, it's already secured a stack of awards and is proving hugely popular with buyers too. It mixes sensible design with attractive looks and is even more spacious and practical than the old car.

But now the crowning glory of the XC90 range has arrived in the shape of the T8 model. Combining a 2.0-litre petrol engine that is both turbocharged and supercharged, with an electric motor and battery pack makes the T8 a plug-in hybrid, and one that has the potential to deliver some impressive performance and economy figures.

Only the keenest of eyes will be able to distinguish the T8 from its conventional siblings. Chiefly, it is the discreet badges front and rear that are the most obvious changes, but also the additional filler flap on the front wing which gives access to the charging connections. This car then doesn't make a fuss about its capabilities; it is as discreetly handsome as all the other XC90s you can buy.

That's no doubt part of the reason why it holds so much kerb appeal.

Where much of the competition has decided that bold or even brash is the way to design a large SUV, the more subtle Volvo approach is welcome.

It's not just a pretty face however, as the XC90 is even more of a family wagon than before. Up front there's acres of space,

even with the wide transmission tunnel, the second row is comfortable and spacious too while the third row is one of the more useful in the class and is easy to access too. The boot is useful in seven-seat mode and huge in five-seat configuration, and plumping for the air suspension means you can raise and lower the rear end for easier loading.

Once installed in that attractive cabin, there's little to tell you that the XC90 T8 has a significantly different powertrain. It has four modes to marshal what's available; hybrid, where the car sorts out the best use of energy for itself, pure which uses electric only, power mode where both petrol engine and electric motor work at the same time to give four-wheel-drive and finally save mode, where the battery's charge is maintained until you choose to use it.

Seamlessly

In hybrid mode, the petrol engine is dormant at low speeds and while the battery is charged, but should you prod the accelerator hard enough, it chimes in seamlessly. As with a regular hybrid you can add charge back into the battery by careful use of the brakes, helping it to reach the claimed electric-only range of 27 miles.

On the flip side, in power mode the T8 is something of subtle rocket ship. There's 401bhp available with both engine and motor combined, enough to propel it to 62mph from rest in only 5.6 seconds. Using it this way means higher fuel consumption of course, but the official NEDC combined figure of 134.5mpg and 49g/km of CO2 means it qualifies for the Government grant.

There's no doubt the T8 is a relatively expensive car – £60,455 in Momentum guise as tested here – but if it suits the way you



.....
If you have almost any combination of kids and adults, the XC90 T8 can cope with it
.....

need to use your car, it also has the potential to be very cheap to run.

The specification is also quite lavish; satellite navigation on the large 9-inch touchscreen, powered leather seats, aluminium trim, 19-inch alloy wheels and a power tailgate to name just a few.

If you have almost any combination of kids and adults, the XC90 T8 can cope with it, making it a superb family vehicle. On the other hand, if you have to commute into a

city, having that saved electric mode is a handy bonus, especially as you can relax in the sumptuous cabin while you do it. It's a luxury car for sure, but one that justifies the expense.

This car summed up in a single word: Capable

If this car was a: a stereo, it would be tasteful, capable of incredible sounds, but also smart enough to cut your electricity bills at the same time

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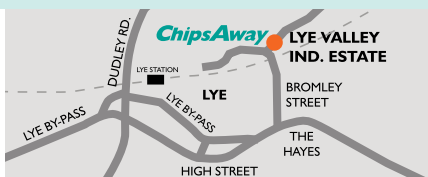
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Batth and Lescott top hitlist of Green discoveries

JOLEON Lescott, Mark Davies and current Wolves skipper Danny Batth top the list of Les Green's 'finds'.

Lescott is the most successful player Green has unearthed with his stellar displays for Wolves earning him a switch to Premier League outfit Everton.

His career boomed with top-flight title success with Manchester City and 26 England caps.

Spells with Albion and Villa followed, but if it wasn't for Green's dedication to duty, Lescott may never have found his way to Molineux.

"What used to happen on a Sunday is that most scouts would go out



Danny Batth

on the morning, go back and have some lunch and then they wouldn't go out in the afternoon," said Green. "I would do the morning, go back to have a bite to eat and go out again in the afternoon."

"One Sunday I was thinking I will go out locally, I won't go far. So I went to the Old Wulfrunians ground and they were playing Greenborne Harriers in an under-13 game. And there was this midfielder, box to box, good attitude, worked hard."

"His parents came over because they had seen me in watching their elder son Aaron. All the scouts liked Aaron and he was at Villa. Joleon sort of went under the radar."

"I said 'he is a good player, he is busy, would he like to come to Wolves?'"

"I passed their details on to Rob Kelly and he called him up. They signed him and made him a centre-half. It's as lucky as that."



Mark Davies

Green had high hopes for Davies and was disappointed when he left Molineux for Bolton.

"I used watch some of them more than once, but not with the good ones, not with Mark Davies, you only needed to see him once," said Green. "He stood out like a sore thumb. He was outstanding but we couldn't sign him then because he was too young. I got him in for training and the rest is history."

"It was disappointing when he left. The former academy boss Chris Evans knew all about the players at Wolves and he took Mark to Bolton, I think they paid £2m for him."

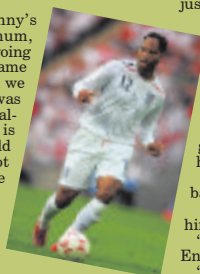
But while Green was thrilled to see Lescott and Davies progress, he bristles with pride when Batth's name is mentioned.

"Geoff Coleman, the Villa scout, liked him and took him to Villa but they bombed him out when he was about 10 or 11."

"Tony Lacey at Wolves then mentioned to me one day that the under-11s had some good players but nothing at the back. And I thought shall I?"

"I phoned up Danny's manager and his mum, Stella, and said I was going to give him a go. He came in and Tony said 'OK we will go with him'. It was his attitude. His mentality is so strong and it is to this day. If you could bottle what he has got every player would be great."

"At every level Danny has had to overcome barriers and he has got where he is because of his atti-



Joleon Lescott

tude. He is a leader too. He likes to lead and he is a strong lad in the dressing room."

"He is someone the players look up to because he works his socks off all the time."

"There is no side to him and no big head on him. Everybody had doubts including me, I just admire the guy. I am a great fan of Danny Batth."

Green still keeps in touch with Batth and offers a reassuring voice when things aren't going well. "Danny contacted me while I was in Portugal for a race recently, he was in the Algarve at the same time," said Green.

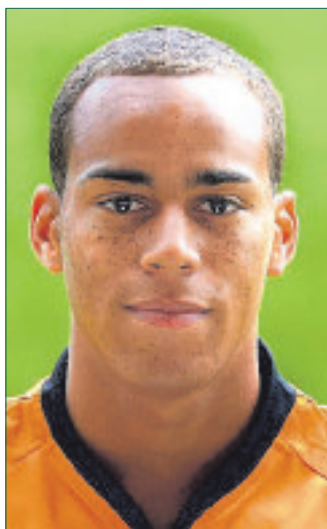
"I messaged him after the West Ham game in the FA Cup last season, I thought he was superb that day."

"And I will get in touch if things are going bad."

"When Joleon got into the first team I sent him the report I had put in on him."

"I was proud of him when he got in the England team."

"I did my job. Players make scouts, scouts don't make players."



Elliott Bennett played for Wolves first team



Ashley Vincent – a Les Green 'spot'



Liam McAlinden was picked up by Wolves



Lee Collins – another of Green's gems



Green found Nathaniel Mendez-Laing



Les Green with shirts on his stairs from some of the players he 'found'

Marathon man who ran up years as Wolves scout

THERE will be plenty of young starlets keen to catch the eye when the football season swings back into action – but one of the best talent-spothers in the area won't be there to cast an eye over the hopefuls.

After 23 years trekking up and down touchlines around the Midlands, 77-year-old super scout Les Green has finally decided to hang up his boots.

Green was a familiar face around the school and park pitches across the region, charged with the task of unearthing a few gems for Wolves.

And having spotted Danny Batth, Mark Davies, Elliott Bennett, Nathaniel Mendez-Laing and Liam McAlinden – and seen them all go on to play for the Molineux men's first team, he quickly became one of the most respected scouts in the area.

He also discovered Joleon Lescott, who went on to play for England and claim Premier League honour with Manchester City.

Respect

Another nine of Green's 'finds', Ashley Vincent, Matthew Barnes-Homer, Amari Morgan-Smith, Chris Cornes, Jordan Fitzpatrick, Lee Collins, Kyle Bennett, Myles Storey and Josh Craddock all went on to play for professional clubs after leaving Wolves.

"I have had the time of my life," said Green, who was born in Ilford, Essex and picked up the Wolves bug after first watching them at Charlton in 1949.

"When people that have been in the game all their lives respect a goalkeeper that played in Division Six of the Wolverhampton Sunday League for Claretgate United on the racecourse at Dunstall, that's a hell of a step."

"When they respect your opinion because you have had success in the past, that's very rewarding."

SPORTING FEATURE

By Nick Elwell

"The ones that get signed are the ones with the strong mentality. They want to win and are competitive."

Green's obsession with Wolves began as a youngster and eventually saw him move to the area in 1967.

"I am from Ilford but I became a Wolves fan at 11 much to my father's disgust, he was a West Ham fan," he said. "My dad took me to see them play Charlton in 1949 and that was it, I was hooked."

"I used to have The Pink (Sporting Star) and I used to come up and watch when I could afford it."

"I moved up here in 67. I got a transfer through the company I worked for, the Post Office Telephones which is now BT."

"I was able to buy a house in Wolverhampton which I could never have done in Ilford. I was next to my football club. It was the football club that brought me up here."

"The people in London that I worked with thought I was stark raving mad. When I came up here it was during the time of Enoch Powell's Rivers of Blood speech. Wolverhampton's image was just about rock bottom. They thought I was going to the depths of hell but in fact I was going to Bilbrook."

Green's opportunity to work with Wolves came via a chance meeting with legendary Midlands scout Ron Jukes who was working for the club.

"When I worked at BT I got myself pretty well-

known, I became a manager within the structure. Alan Parsons, who worked on the sales side, was manager of Boldmere St Michaels," he said. "I used to go around the non-league games and Alan introduced me to Ron. We got talking and he said 'do you get around much?'"

"I said I like to get round non-league grounds and he gave me his card and said 'if you see anything let me know'."

"Things went from there and I joined as a school-boy scout in the centre of excellence, that was 23 years ago."

"Tony Painter, who was Ron's assistant, would ring me on a Friday and say, 'can you go and watch Cannock schools play or Wolverhampton schools?'"

Mentality

"I would go and then put a report in on any players that I saw. Something I discovered at the start, is that the ones that get signed are the ones with the strong mentality, the desire, pushy if you like," added Green. "They want to win and are competitive."

Green said his love affair with the old gold and black would continue. He and his second wife Jill and the youngest of his 14 grandchildren, Sam, are season ticket holders.

And, despite calling time on his scouting exploits the 77-year-old is certainly not running out of steam. Ending his association with Wolves means he can devote more time to his other love, running.

The globe-trotting runner will continue to step out for Cannock and Stafford Athletics Club and hopes to add to the 47 marathons he has run.

"I ran a 10k for GB Masters in Portugal recently and that was about the 20th country I have raced in," he said. "I have done 47 marathons. I have done Paris, Rome, New York, Boston, London, Athens. I have also done the Himalayan 100-mile. I did the four-day 100k in Sahara desert and four years ago I did the polar circle marathon in Greenland."



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Title fight is on cards for 'Dangerous'

HALESOWEN'S Lennox Clarke saw off his opponent in the first round as he topped the bill at Walsall Town Hall. A title fight could now await the super middleweight.

Just 38 seconds were left of the opener as 'Dangerous' wiped out Dean Gillen in a scheduled eight-round contest.

The 24-year-old is already mandatory challenger to the vacant Midlands title, but a suitable co-contender has yet to be found. Clarke may end up bypassing that and going after English champion Jahmaine Smyle, from Leicester.

West Bromwich's Tom Stokes opened Saturday night's show and entered seventh heaven with a four-round victory over Lewis van Poetsch. He has been petitioned to box for the area middleweight title.

Four other bouts featured on this 'Summer Scorchers' show, presented by promoter Errol Johnson's Black Country Boxing outfit.

Unbeaten Craig Morris, from Ludlow in Shropshire, outpointed Lithuanian Arvydas Trizno 60-54 in a light middleweight six-rounder. Solihull's Jordan Clayton was penalised but was still an easy winner over four rounds against Russian-born Andrej Capur.

Birmingham's Luke Walker threw the kitchen sink at Dan Blackwell, the brother of Chris Eubank Junior's opponent Nick. Victory was his by a 39-38 points call.

There was nothing technical about the shoot out between Coventry's James Montgomery and Brummie Dwayne Sheldon, which ended with the second round just 12 seconds old.

Montgomery had already been down from a stiff right hook and, once more, dropped his hands to be clobbered again with a right hook. Sheldon resumed his attacks looking for the finish.

Relay results push depleted swimming team up rankings

A DEPLETED Halesowen Swimming Club had a tough gala in Cheslyn Hay for the final round of the Mercian Summer League as so many swimmers were unavailable.

Halesowen began well and were in first place after 10 races, but with younger members having to swim in older age groups they soon fell into last place. The team had had some good relay results towards the end, finishing in fifth place and pushing Solihull into last position.

Richard Phillips won both the open age 100m individual medley and 100m butterfly. Max Rollason won the open age 100m backstroke.

The 14 years girls freestyle relay team of of Paige Robbins, Jessica Jones and Melissa Parsons and Holly Simpson were successful. Paige, Jessica and Melissa then swam against much older swimmers, together with Tracey Worton in the open age girl's freestyle relay to win again.

The 12 years and under boys relay team won both their medley and freestyle relay. The open boys medley relay team were also winners

Jumping for joy over captain's role



GB Olympic team captain Kristian Thomas

KRISTIAN Thomas says it is an 'honour' to be made captain of Team GB's men's gymnastics team for Rio 2016.

The 27-year-old, who trains at Earls Gymnastics Club in Halesowen two days a week, has been named in the team alongside Louis Smith, Max Whitlock, Nile Wilson and Brinn Bevan.

The former pupil of St Edmund's Academy, Wolverhampton, is going to his second Olympic Games after winning bronze in the team event at London 2012.

"Obviously that's a great honour to be named team captain," he said. "The lads make it easy

Gymnastics

for me because they're so experienced themselves. Max is in his second Olympics, Louis is in third.

"It might just be a few reminders and little things here and there but generally it's just keeping the guys together as a group."

Thomas is hoping to reach the individual final of both the vault and high bar in Rio, but has the best chance of a medal in the team event.

"I've obviously got individual aims and aspirations, but first and foremost is the team competition."

WES TO LEAD FROM FRONT

STAND-IN captain Wes Griffiths is looking to lead Halesowen Cricket Club back up the table - starting when they travel to Coventry and North Warwickshire on Saturday.

The club suffered a batting blip against Wombourne last weekend and had to settle for a losing draw.

The result leaves them fifth in the Birmingham and District Premier League Division 2 standings, 50 points from the top spot at the half-way stage of the season.

Griffiths will lead the side over the coming weeks with club captain Richard Booker on holiday - and he is desperate to ensure they get back to winning ways at the first opportunity.

Said Griffiths: "I am looking forward to the opportunity to lead the team in the next few games as they are important for us to get up amongst the front runners - undoubtedly we need to get back to winning ways and get up there."

Halesowen were undone by left arm spinner Kuldip Diwan who took 4-27 for Wombourne, reducing Booker's side to 127-7 in reply to a target of 250.

Meanwhile, the Second XI demonstrated plenty of character to earn a winning draw at mid-table Moseley.

Mark Fisher (91) led them to a solid score of 225-8 from their 50 overs, before Juar Johal took 6-37 to reduce them to 166-9 and come within a whisker of victory.

The Third XI saw their game succumb to the weather, whilst the Fourth XI bowled out Martley for 217, with Raqueeb Khan taking 6-24, before a strong all-around batting display ensured they chased down the total with four overs to spare.

The Second XI will host West Bromwich and Dartmouth at Seth Somers Park on Saturday, while the Third and Fourth XIs will take on Astwood Bank away and home respectively.

Finally, the club are hosting a number of multi-sport summer camps over the coming weeks at a price of £20 per day or £80 per week, starting on July 27 and taking place for six weeks.

For more details contact Chris Jones on 07950 715832 or email chrisjones12@yahoo.co.uk.

Singles loss spurs Whiley on



Jordanne Whiley and Yui Kamiji following victory in the the wheelchair doubles final

THREE-TIME champion Jordanne Whiley was determined not to leave Wimbledon empty-handed after heartbreak in the wheelchair singles.

The 24-year-old Halesowen ace won her third consecutive SW19 doubles title on Sunday. But she admitted that she was still reeling from her semi-final defeat in the singles tournament.

Whiley has eight wheelchair doubles Grand Slams to her name but her only singles title came in the US Open last year.

After Sunday's triumph alongside Yui Kamiji of Japan, Whiley is now setting her sights on Olympic glory in Rio.

"We didn't really expect to win three times in

a row because obviously that's a great achievement," she said. "But it wasn't like the first time we won it when it was all tense and a really massive win. It was easier, there was less pressure, I wasn't that nervous."

Top seeds Whiley and Kamiji beat second seeds Jiske Griffioen and Aniek van Koot 6-2, 6-2 in the final on court 17. It came after Whiley lost to Van Koot in the singles semi-final.

"I was so gutted that I lost the singles. I just wanted to win a title at Wimbledon. I didn't want to go home empty-handed," said Whiley.

She has now begun training for Rio, and will play in the British Open with Lucy Shuker - with whom she won a bronze at London 2012.

Heathens get the better of their rivals

CRADLEY climbed up to second in the National League table with a convincing 52-38 home win over arch-rivals Mildenhall at Monmore Green.

The rivalry between the two clubs was reignited last month when the Heathens' trip to West Row was postponed following a dispute over the visitors' line-up. However, Will Pottinger's side ensured they gained on-track bragging rights with another strong all-round team display to extend their winning run to four successive competitive meetings.

Monmore masterclasses from dominant top two Ashley Morris and Max Clegg ensured they were never troubled by the Fen Tigers.

Morris equalled his National League track record in the opening race to give his side the lead. Heathens never looked back as they edged clear thanks to another determined performance from Bradley Andrews. The New Zealand-born youngster had a hectic evening with seven rides but was involved in their first four heat advantages to ensure they seized the upper hand.

He also protected their advantage with victory in heat two after partner Layne Cupitt fell and demonstrated plenty of composure to force a mistake from Alfie Bowtell as he challenged for third on the final bend of heat four.

Morris and Clegg struck maximums in heats 13 and 15 to ensure Mildenhall left empty-handed. Morris required a brave move to round the battling Connor Coles on the opening bend of heat 10. Clegg earned a full maximum

Richard Andrews continued his impressive start with the Heathens to bag double figures and claim the flag with a classy heat eight ride. Luke Chessell added an important paid eight though plagued by mechanical problems. Youngster Cupitt hit the deck three times but his side gained an important victory.

Purchase blow as he misses season

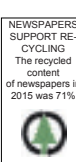
CRADLEY have been dealt a blow as James Purchase will miss the rest of the season. The 28-year-old suffered a shoulder injury in a crash against Buxton on June 13 and has now been advised to undergo surgery.

Purchase admits the news has left him 'devastated' but is determined to return to the saddle next season.

Said Purchase: "It's a huge disappointment that my season is over."

"I was hoping to be able to come back after a few weeks, but I've seen the surgeon and he says if I don't get it operated on it'll just be the same in six months' time."

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Thursday, July 14, 2016



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